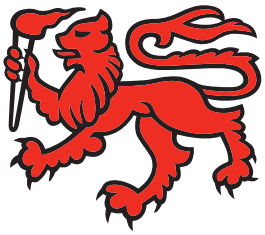

UNIVERSITY *of* TASMANIA

# An Applied Investigation of Ian Pearce's Mature Output: Interpretation and Reinterpretation of Traditional Jazz Within a Tasmanian Context


by

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# DECLARATION

This exegesis contains the results of research carried out at the University of Tasmania, Conservatorium of Music between 2013 and 2018. It contains no material that, to my knowledge, has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the university or any other institution, except by way of background information that is duly acknowledged in the exegesis. I declare that this exegesis is my own work and contains no material previously published or written by another person except where clear acknowledgement or reference has been made in the text. This exegesis may be made available for loan and limited copying in accordance with the Copyright Act 1968.

Matthew Joshua Boden

December 13, 2018

# Contents

**Abstract**

Ian Pearce (1921 - 2012) was an iconic figure within the Australian jazz scene, and pioneer of traditional jazz performance practice in Tasmania. His development and approach to the assimilation of traditional jazz practices provide a model for solving the problems arising from artistic isolation, and underpin the development of his unique creative voice. This research project takes Ian Pearce's contribution as a case study, analysing his development and improvisational modalities, in order to uncover a method of interpretation and reinterpretation of traditional jazz within the context of Tasmanian jazz heritage, that in turn has enhanced my own performance practice. This project documents processes of experiential learning through performance based on a folio of original work including commercial releases *The Last Sheiks* (2013) and *Post Matinée* (2016), and two live concert recordings. The accompanying exegesis contextualizes this research conducted through performance, adopting an auto-ethnographic approach for critical reflection on the work in the folio. It also includes a body of transcriptions of Pearce's work that provides a unique contribution to the understanding of the musical language of a key figure within Australian jazz; an area of academic study that has thus far been under-represented.

**Acknowledgements**

It takes a village, as the saying goes.

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This work is dedicated to my grandmother, May Boden. I got there, Nan!

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# Chapter 1

# Introduction, Literature Review, and Methodology

## 1.1 Introduction

Ian Pearce (1921 – 2012) was a Tasmanian jazz pianist known for his work within traditional jazz styles. His career in performance and recording, which spans from the mid 1930s until his passing in 2012, was focused on traditional jazz in various settings, from solo to large ensemble. Pearce is acknowledged as an important figure in Australian jazz, as he was one of the earliest practitioners in the country, with one of the longest running careers. Pearce and the various ensembles in which he performed thus provided models that laid the foundation for the subsequent development of jazz groups in Australia.

Prior to commencing this research, my primary mode of performance practice was within the realm of what could be termed 'modern' and 'mainstream' jazz. I had acquired some facility within 'traditional' jazz, but this was achieved through a piecemeal approach, and was largely focused on re-creation as opposed to reinterpretation. As my career has developed and I have become further integrated into the Australian jazz scene, I have developed a keen interest in the performance practice of traditional jazz styles, and how this music came to be performed in this country and by whom. Through my investigations of this music and my attempts to assimilate the musical language it presents, challenges arise in the interpretation and reinterpretation of traditional jazz in relative artistic isolation given my circumstance as a Tasmanian-based musician.

The purpose of this research was twofold: to document processes of experiential learning through performance, and to investigate a case study in order to uncover a method of interpretation and reinterpretation of traditional jazz within the context of Tasmanian jazz heritage, thereby contextualizing the practice-led research. Transcription and analysis of Pearce's mature solo piano output contained on the recording *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III – Ian Pearce*[1] was undertaken in order to uncover key materials of his performance practice and improvisational modalities. These materials and modalities were then incorporated into my own performance practice.

The identification of these materials and modalities materializing in my artistic practice, whether as a result of intentional application or via osmosis through the course of this research, provided a manner in which to address the propositions posed in a practice-led capacity. As a consequence, the new knowledge produced throughout this study will incorporate transcriptions and analysis of the improvisation modalities of Pearce alongside a collection of sound and video recordings that indicate how traditional jazz can be interpreted and reinterpreted within the context of Tasmanian jazz heritage, and demonstrate the continuum of this modality of musical assimilation.

As this is a practice-led research project, one of the primary motivations for undertaking this study was to expand upon and broaden my artistic practice, and to become further adept at the interpretation and reinterpretation of traditional jazz. As mentioned above, prior to this research, my artistic practice was less focused on this area of jazz performance. This

[1] Little Arthur Productions, LACD03, 1994.

research has provided a clear model and materials to draw upon, and has enabled a far greater consolidation of my disparate artistic practice which has led to a much greater deepening and rounding of my capabilities as an interpreter and re-interpreter of jazz. Having traced my arc as a practitioner from my initial contact with jazz, and my increasing desire and need to return to the origins of this music in order to reach maturity as an artist, I find myself on the same path as Pearce as to my influences, and my desire to imitate, assimilate, and create.

With this in mind, primary considerations when selecting a model for investigation included: the necessity of the model being a long-standing and recognised practitioner of traditional jazz within Australia, the model to be a performer on the same instrument as my primary instrument, a personal connection with the model and an affinity for their music, and that the recorded output of the model contain specific and overt examples of the interpretation and re-interpretation of the music in question. Ian Pearce was chosen, as his output meets all of these criteria. An additional advantage was that the model chosen was also a composer – the compositions examined represent a distillation of techniques and performance modalities that are of great value to this research. In addition to being a pianist, Pearce originally came to jazz by way of the cornet (very briefly), and subsequently the trombone. Pearce's introduction to the piano in his early teenage years led to an interest in furthering his ability on the instrument, and, as will be shown below, his ultimate shift to the piano as his means of artistic expression. I will posit that his time on the trombone imparted some influence on his piano conceptions; however, it would appear that the crucial nexus that informed his mature artistic aesthetic comprised his circumstance including his peer groups, and key influences. As will be shown below, Pearce

moved permanently to the piano at a formative stage in his development, relegating his time on the trombone to a footnote in his artistic development.

The current state of academic literature surrounding Ian Pearce's career is limited to generalisations and brief notes within the standard existing texts and scholarly work addressing jazz in Australia. It is hoped that this research will provide information for those wishing to further their understanding of the re-interpretation of traditional jazz from an Australian standpoint, whether this be from a practice perspective or an academic one. Hopefully this research provides a bedrock for further academic investigation of the area, and provides further documentation of the Australian jazz scene, filling a gap within the existing literature.

Prior to surveying the existing literature, it is crucial to define the terminology used within the research proposition, particularly 'traditional jazz', 'the interpretation of repertoire', and 'mature output'.

Jazz, as the commonly agreed upon set of traditions, genres, and styles that encompass the current understanding of the musical entity, defies clear encasement in neat definitions due in part to its oral and aural nature, our reliance on recorded material in forming historical overviews, and the common complaint that musicians and scholars alike attempt to consecrate immutable fact on top of supposed corollaries. Jazz celebrates the individualistic and the idiosyncratic, and enables an avenue towards a truly personal mode of expression, whether by remaining within recognized areas of the music or extending beyond.

It is outside the scope of this thesis to attempt a definitive definition of the word 'jazz'. Moreover, given the general state of the historiography of jazz, it would seem that any current endeavor to do so will inevitably fail, due to the relative youth of the subject at hand, and to the constant conflation of opinion and objective analysis that brings forth a regular stream of contradictions, wreathed in ontological smoke.

It is crucial to acknowledge at the outset that one is dealing with a music that was created and given life by a specific portion of a population at a specific moment in history, with their own identity and history. This is not to deny external (or even extrinsic) influences, but rather to place the creation with its creators, and to recognize that there are inherent issues of race, and problems of discourse surrounding ownership and authenticity when discussing jazz in any context.

Jazz as a musical entity, when considering its startling variety and breadth, is almost impossible to pin down when using traditional music analysis tools such as notions of form, harmony, rhythm, and melody. Evidently there are loosely defining characteristics that set it apart from Western art music, but within the increasingly problematic term 'jazz', things are rather fractious. It is necessary to immediately resort to sub-genre splintering and the splitting of hairs.[2] In light of these issues surrounding concrete definitions, it is perhaps best to view the study of jazz, and especially the present case study of musical reception, assimilation, transculturation, and acculturation, in part as a phenomenological study that

[2] Throughout this thesis the term 'Western art music' will be used in place of the problematic term 'classical music'.

focuses more on circumstance and process, as opposed to the development of a proscriptive determination.

To return to the issue of definitions, for the purposes of this research, the term 'traditional jazz' and its common abbreviation 'trad jazz' will be used to indicate the music of the earliest practitioners centered around New Orleans (including but not limited to Jelly Roll Morton, Sidney Bechet, Louis Armstrong, et al), and the music following the migration of many of these musicians from New Orleans north to Chicago in the late 1910s and early 1920s. This music has alternatively been labelled as 'hot music', 'New Orleans music', and 'Dixieland' among others. To paint with broad brush strokes, 'trad jazz' centers around the pre-swing, pre-WWII American practitioners.

Pearce took umbrage with this term as a label for his artistic practice. In an interview with Jan Kuplis at the St Helens jazz festival in 1994 he states:

> Knowing the artist can help to understand what they are playing. I'm a one man campaigner against the use of the world 'trad' because it's so easy, simple, and it says something about a style of music which is basically Dixieland New Orleans or something, but it doesn't tell you anything about the [individual performers].[3]

This is indicative of Pearce's view of jazz – that it is an individual mode of artistic expression centered within a musical genre.

[3] Jan Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman: An Account of the Life and Times of Tasmania's Gentleman of Jazz* (Sandy Bay: Jan Kuplis, 2015), 363.

Turning to the notion of the 'interpretation of repertoire', in the context of this research this refers to the performance of composed works, whether from the canon as it stands, or original compositions. This composed material obviously contains material that is not improvised; however, following the tradition of jazz performance practice, the composed material can be approached more loosely than that of the Western art music canon, and is often subject to individual interpretation. 'Interpretation' therefore, for the purposes of this study, refers to the manner in which composed material is performed, and also to the means by which the composed work undergoes variation, and utilization as improvisatory material through the duration of a performance. In this manner, 'interpretation' refers to performances comprising the execution of composed material, and the performer's response to that material. 'Reinterpretation', in the context of this study, refers to the process of examining and interpreting musical modalities in a new light.

The notion of 'mature output' encapsulates, for the purposes of this study, an artist's fully-formed musical aesthetic – the artist is no longer searching for different modes of expression, but is producing work that is identifiably their own, with a consistent artistic voice present.

Throughout the chapter concerning key influences, I have included many lengthy quotes from key figures surrounding Pearce, and reviewers of his output. These quotes are included in order to provide the reader with a sense of place, and the people concerned – the anecdotal and descriptive narrative provides an insight into Pearce's circumstance.

## 1.2 Literature Review

Jazz in Australia has enjoyed a long-running and colourful history. From its naissance on these shores as a mysterious music filtered and altered on its journey, to its current position as a recognised and lauded form of authentic Australian artistic expression, jazz in Australia has formed and informed Australian popular and artistic culture over the last century. Jazz is a music that was formed elsewhere, but is also an adaptable music that is informed by and reflects the environment into which it is imported. Taking as read the fact that jazz is an American conception, the question immediately arises as to the definition of the notion of 'Australian' jazz and the degree to which this idea conjures a *désaccord* with the precept of jazz's immutable American heritage.

That the roots of this music and its early development occurred beyond the borders of Australia is not lost on its acolytes; indeed, it is an essential integrant in the emergence and ongoing development of an Australian jazz approach and sound. Musicologists and scholars have addressed the issue of 'Australian-ness' in jazz in varying degrees since the academisation and institutionalisation of jazz began in this country. John Whiteoak, in his engaging history of improvisatory music in Australia from the mid 19th to late 20th centuries, explores the notions of decontextualisation, the tyranny of distance and 'imitation-ecstatic' performance practice in pointing towards a modality of musical problem solving, and of intuitive, experimental synthesis.[4] Andrew Bisset, in his overview of the history of jazz in Australia, notes that Australian jazz musicians have created an identifiable jazz sound, but

[4] John Whiteoak, *Playing Ad Lib: Improvisatory Music In Australia 1836 - 1970* (Strawberry Hills: Currency Press Limited, 1999), xiv.

does not explore this idea in any meaningful way, skirting the issue with a cooking analogy that equates jazz to be a meal that is recognized the world over, and that the Australian version contains different herbs and spices.[5] Timothy Stevens' dissertation on the Red Onions Jazz Band of Melbourne thoroughly explores the notion of Australian jazz built on circumstance as opposed to style, an approach of particular use in a discussion of Tasmanian jazz. Stevens' work is considered and balanced due to his extensive analysis of a landmark Australian ensemble's output, and the comparisons to the models on which they based themselves.[6] Bruce Clunies-Ross notes that Australian jazz musicians developed their craft away from the weight and immediacy of the American jazz tradition, allowing them to assume a creative, problem-solving approach as opposed to an imitative or conservative one.[7] Bruce Johnson is perhaps the most prolific of all Australian musicologists and scholars examining jazz in the present day. Johnson points to the difficulties surrounding any discussion of '…the qualities of music and place'[8], and indicates that the amateur standing of Australia's jazz musicians (particularly in the first thirty to forty years of its local development) has contributed to the local character of the music, as has the Australian lore of 'mateship'. Johnson also notes that:

[5] Andrew Bisset, *Black Roots, White Flowers: A History of Jazz in Australia* (Sydney: ABC Enterprises, 1987), 40.
[6] Stevens, "The Origins, Significance and Development of the Red Onions Jazz Band." (PhD diss., University of Melbourne, 2000), 1.
[7] Clunies-Ross, Bruce (1979) 'An Australian Sound: Jazz in Melbourne and Adelaide 1941–51'. In *Australian Popular Culture*, ed. Peter Spearritt and David Walker, 62–80. Sydney: George Allen & Unwin.
[8] Bruce Johnson, *The Inaudible Music: Jazz, Gender and Australian Modernity* (Strawberry Hills: Currency Press PTY LTD, 2000), 161.

> The analysis of what makes this 'Australian' sound is complicated further by the undeveloped state of the symbolic discourse for a music like jazz, making its distinctive coloration resistant to notation.[9]

The existing academic discourse surrounding the development of jazz in Australia deals primarily with generalities and over-arching historical narratives without probing individual development in any great depth. Technical discussions of the musical development of individuals and groups are largely absent from the current corpus of work, with the exception of groups that are considered to be archetypical of the consensus surrounding the notion of an 'Australian' jazz identity – primarily Bell's groups.

The aforementioned general histories contain assumptions regarding the emergence of jazz in Australia and its place within the framework of a music originating in America. There is agreeance on the notion that Australian jazz exists, however the question remains as to whether it should be seen to be within a continuum birthed in The United States of America that has developed without interruption or divergence from its origins, despite its migration into a foreign culture. Bruce Johnson notes that jazz, in its importation into Australia, was competing with other music from its European heritage, and that Australian 'jazz' bands were effectively operating primarily as dance bands, with current jazz practices being slowly assimilated.[10] Having noted this, Johnson advises "…we should still try to hear the Australian musicians on their own terms."[11] What these terms might be is not made clear. Andrew Bisset lays blame on the musicians themselves for not being more distinctive in

[9] Johnson, *The Inaudible Music*, 161.
[10] Johnson, *The Inaudible Music,* 12.
[11] Johnson, *The Inaudible Music,* 12.

their artistic output, while discussing Australian jazz composition in the closing notes to *Black Roots, White Flowers:*

> Yet original Australian compositions have had no real influence on the development on the Australian style of jazz. If no one had composed a single tune the style would be the same today, because it is the improvisation and the interpretation which determines the style, not the tune itself.… Their homage to everything American and their readiness to fall back on the old war horses blinds them to the large stable of good Australian tunes.[12]

The casual assumption of Australian musicians fitting within the American continuum is presented in the same breath as berating the Australians for not being sufficiently daring to embrace their own peers' work. Whilst Bisset is dealing with composition in this passage, the idea that improvisational modalities and interpretation determine style is presented, without exploring this notion in any depth. The entire concluding chapter of *Black Roots, White Flowers* reinforces Bisset's apparent view that while jazz is an American music, Australians have managed to perform competent facsimiles of the original, therefore 'fitting in' appropriately, and contributing some interesting footnotes to the existing canon. It is telling that Bisset begins his final paragraph by stating 'Jazz in Australia is here to stay'.[13] Not Australian Jazz, but 'Jazz in Australia'. The concluding phrase allows for the possibility that Australians have appropriated the music, while '…infusing it with a distinctive flavour,

[12] Bisset, *Black Roots, White* Flowers, 168.
[13] Bisset, *Black Roots, White Flowers*, 182.

best described as "Australian"'.[14] This adjective and its implications for Australian jazz are unfortunately not explored further.

The notion of an Australian jazz arising from the importation of jazz from America and thus being separated from its direct antecedents appears in John Whiteoak's work *Playing Ad Lib: Improvisatory Music in Australia 1836 – 1970.*[15] Whiteoak argues that it is difficult to grant Australia its own pre-history, given that the most prominent components of early jazz that are evident in the particular pre-history of American jazz, which include African-American forms such as spirituals and work songs, and other elements from West African music and Caribbean music, were not present in Australia and therefore were not of great influence on the development of jazz in Australia.[16] This is a welcome break from the general desire to cast Australian jazz musicians purely in the light of the continuum emerging from North America, with no musical identity afforded them other than vague notions of 'Australian-ness'. Taking the acceptance of an alternative pre-history as a starting point, and acknowledging the issues of decontextualisation, and what Whiteoak calls the 'tyranny of distance'[17] - Australia's extreme isolation from the rest of the Western world and its cultural influence – it is clear that even whilst holding certain models in high regard and attempting to assimilate through direct imitation, Australia's pioneering jazz musicians created a distinct musical identity through their unique circumstances. Whiteoak provides an encapsulation of this notion:

[14] Bisset, *Black Roots, White Flowers*, 182.
[15] Whiteoak, *Playing Adlib*, 83.
[16] Whiteoak, *Playing Adlib*, 83.
[17] Whiteoak, *Playing Adlib,* xiv.

> White Australian musical development has taken place largely in isolation from direct interaction with the mainstream of European, American and African-American creative thought and activity. Consider, for example, the difficulties faced by early Australian jazz musicians attempting to learn what is basically an aural tradition of improvisation in total isolation from live contact with African-American musical culture. Even the increasing availability of imported sound recordings in the 1930s could not provide an adequate substitute; instead, Australian musicians were confronted with bewilderingly out-of-sync waves of decontextualized musical influence.[18]

In his autobiography *Graeme Bell: Australian Jazzman*, Graeme Bell is clear on the *modus operandi* of his group, and the aesthetic they pursued. Whilst in Paris listening to 'Claude Luther and his Lorientals' perform in a jazz cellar on the Left Bank, Bell remarked 'The band's only fault was that they copied the old jazz, whereas we used it as our model from which to express our own music'.[19]

The assertion of the importation and linear continuation of an American music rather than the construction of an inherently Australian music informed by the American models will be most rigorously tested by the investigation of one individual's work, his interaction with other musicians and groups and a technical analysis of his recorded output in comparison to the models that were used in the attainment of jazz performance practice.

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[18] Whiteoak, *Playing Adlib,* xiv.
[19] Graeme Bell and Jack Mitchell, *Graeme Bell: Australian Jazzman* (Frenchs Forest: Child & Associates, 1988), 99.

From its roots as an American creation, jazz has been appropriated either as a mode of performance practice to the point of literal recreation including the performance of transcriptions, or as methodology to follow more or less loosely, throughout most, if not all, of the Western world. It is the latter approach that has generally been taken by Australian musicians wishing to play jazz, out of necessity given the lack of available recorded source material (especially prior to the Second World War), lack of exposure to live performances and a lack of available tuition in anything other than European musical forms and styles. Given the nature of jazz as an aural tradition stemming from African-American musical culture, Australian musicians were only very rarely able to access the music at its source, and then mostly as audience members rather than being actively engaged with a transference of musical knowledge. This isolated, decontextualised environment led to an erratic assimilation of the studied material. Whiteoak explains:

> The consequences for isolated musicians attempting to adopt a performance culture by observing visiting performers or studying notation, recordings or instruction manuals were the loss of certain vital information and the mutation of what remained. This mutation could take the form of blurring, grey-out (watering-down) and especially simplification of distinctive performance characteristics.[20]

These issues are noted in Graeme Bell's autobiography, Jan Kuplis' work on Tom Pickering[21] and John Sangster's autobiography[22], among other sources. Decontextualisation goes some

[20] Whiteoak, *Playing Adlib,* xiv.
[21] Jan Kuplis and Tom Pickering, *Tom Pickering Jazzmaker: The Story of Tom Pickering's Band and its Role in the Development of Jazz in Tasmania* (Sandy Bay: Jan Kuplis, 2012).
[22] John Sangster, *Seeing the rafters: The Life and Times of an Australian Jazz Musician* (Ringwood: Penguin Books, 1988).

way towards explaining the differences in sound between Australian jazz groups and American jazz groups. Isolation and a tendency towards a problem-solving mentality borne out of what was in effect a frontier society led to Australian musicians exploring the music through the few materials at their disposal, and extrapolating from this incomplete data. This remoteness and lack of context for the few materials they could obtain led to a certain experimental synthesis; a 'filling-in-the-gaps' approach, giving rise to the beginning of a local style.

Through their love of this unique American art form and their sheer enthusiasm for appropriating it and performing it, Australian jazz musicians, and in particular Australian jazz musicians modelling their performance and compositional aesthetics on what is generally termed 'traditional' jazz[23], moved towards an approach and consequently a sound that was idiosyncratic, whilst still retaining core elements of the models that they so revered.

As is noted above, the four authors that are of key importance to any extended study of Australian jazz are Bruce Johnson, Andrew Bisset, Bruce Clunies-Ross, and John Whiteoak. All have made significant contributions to the literature surrounding the emergence of jazz and jazz performance by Australians, including work on Australians living or working abroad for extended periods where these musicians are deemed to have influenced various international scenes (the Czechoslovakian and British jazz scenes in the case of the Bell band), or have retained a certain 'Australian-ness' despite their international experiences. Whilst they have all published notable works, at various times and to various lengths, on the

[23] There are multiple terms that are interchangeably employed in jazz parlance: trad jazz, Dixieland, and hot jazz among others. These terms refer to the corpus of jazz that pre-dates WWII, and is centered around the musicians operating in New Orleans, and eventually in Chicago.

general sweep of the history of jazz in Australia, they have also written on the subject of style within Australian jazz, with a view to dissecting the elements that constitute an identifiably Australian jazz sound.

Bruce Johnson is a particularly prolific scholar of Australian jazz. Johnson is the author and co-author of several books on Australian jazz and has produced numerous papers and articles for music journals and magazines. Of particular note among the articles are the discussions surrounding the question of the possibility of the existence of an 'Australian' jazz sound, his work on traditional jazz in Australia, and his contributions towards an understanding of cultural transference and Australian cultural history.

Andrew Bissett's primary contribution to the literature surrounding Australian jazz is his work *Black Roots, White Flowers: A History of Jazz in Australia*. This work is useful for its discussion of the early days of jazz in Australia, as it contains a wealth of anecdotes; it also lists many artists that visited the country and thus contributed to the awareness and development of jazz in Australia. It is disappointing and at times frustrating that this volume contains very little in the way of referencing (with the exception of the occasional reference to a newspaper article): this limits is usefulness to that of a springboard to further research, albeit an extremely advantageous springboard. John Whiteoak's work entitled *Playing Ad Lib: Improvisatory Music in Australia 1836-1970* is notable not only for its extensive overview of improvisatory music in Australia in the 19th century and earlier 20th century, but also for its employment of clear musical examples. It is the exception rather than the rule in

the existing body of work on Australian jazz.[24] Bruce Clunies-Ross contributed a thought-provoking paper to the collection entitled *Australian Popular Culture,* making a case for the identification of an Australian sounds through looking at the Melbourne and Adelaide jazz scenes during the decade 1941 to 1951. Clunies-Ross is no shrinking flower, as is evidenced by his scathing rebuttal of some rather ill-thought through criticism levelled at him in the pages of *Jazz: The Australasian Contemporary Music Magazine*.[25] Clunies-Ross presents a strong case for the isolation of certain elements that bestow Australian jazz with a clear identity in previous issues of the above magazine, and his clear arguments are another pillar on which to stand in gaining an overview of the jazz landscape in Australia.

There is a degree of agreeance of viewpoint evident in the literature available – style is often equated purely with the sound produced by a given ensemble, with comparisons made to American models for apparent ease of categorisation and differentiation. Factors such as instrumentation and choice of repertoire are highlighted, with rarely any discussion of the technical elements of the music. Extra-musical aspects such as vague notions of 'the Australian character', 'irreverence', 'Australian humour', 'larrikinism' and the notion of the 'have a go' attitude are proffered as points of delineation when attempting to set apart the jazz music produced by Australians from their American models. Whilst evidently relevant, what is missing is in-depth scrutiny of individuals and groups operating on the Australian jazz scene in order to better test the conclusions arrived at in the existing scholarship.

[24] *Playing Ad Lib: Improvisatory Music in Australia 1836-1970* began life as John Whiteaok's Ph.D. thesis. This work was completed in 1993 and was originally titled 'Australian Approaches to Improvisatory Practice, 1836-1970: A Melbourne Perspective'. It was published in its current form in 1999.

[25] For those interested in reading the rebuttal it can be found in Bruce Clunies-Ross, "Dave Dallwitz and Australia Jazz" *Jazz: The Australasian Contemporary Music Magazine*, May-June, 1983, 6-8.

A notable exception to the consensus surrounding the notions of style as discussed above is Timothy Stevens' work in his doctoral thesis on the Red Onion Jazz Band.[26] Stevens addresses the issue of Australian style and its scrutiny by scholars of Australian jazz, triangulating the work of Johnson, Bisset and Clunies-Ross, and expressing concern that their

> …isolation of Australian style is a synchronic exercise based on the assumption that a more plentiful supply of recordings as time went on diminished the scope for individual expression. This comes dangerously close, however, to denying the music a capacity for change within the stylistic boundaries over time. Put crudely: since style is constructed directly from musical sound and equated with it (hence the suspect interchangeability of the terms), once the sound has changed, the style has gone.[27]

Stevens goes on to challenge the assumptions present in the arguments of these scholars that sound and style are inextricably linked, and to present his argument for the adoption of the term 'circumstance' in order to better represent the context within which jazz developed in Australia, and the modalities of acquisition that were adopted. The principle difference between Steven's approach and that of Johnson, Bisset, Clunies-Ross, Clare and Whiteoak is that Stevens depicts sound as being mutable within the boundaries of style – the two concepts are not bound together in lockstep. Steven's take on style is such that it allows many and varied sounds to be produced by musicians existing within and responding

[26] Stevens, PhD diss., (2000).
[27] Stevens, *The Origins, Development, and Significance of the Red Onions Jazz Band,* 20.

to their environment - their 'circumstances' – even when these musicians are operating within strict stylistic parameters. Thus, it is not only the end result that is valuable or worthy: it is also the *process,* or dynamic approach that the musicians undertook to learn and generate the music that is essential in determining the final sound that results.[28] This is vital to understanding the divergence of Australian jazz from its American roots, and its patent differences.[29] Stevens' approach allows for greater scope in the investigation of the defining characteristics of Australian jazz.

Given the fact that the nature of most scholarly writing concerning Australian jazz is of a general nature, it is perhaps unsurprising that there exists a tendency in the existing literature to gravitate towards broad statements, with reference to, and indeed reverence for the American models, rendering the Australian sound merely imitative in the eyes and ears of some of these writers, with the 'Australian-ness' of the music being produced stemming from the simple fact that Australians were performing it. This study will in part attempt to build on the work done by Stevens, and the aforementioned scholars, in attempting to isolate the circumstances that contribute to the particular qualities of Australian jazz through a case study of one particular individual's choices and subsequent career.

In addition to the scholars, critics and journalists have played a part in shaping the notions of Australian jazz. The barrister and jazz *amateur* William H. (Bill) Miller is a central figure in the history of jazz in Australia, playing a large role in shaping the tastes of musicians and the

[28]For further reading on the distinctions in the existing scholarship see: Stevens, *Red Onions Jazz Band,* 15-28.
[29]Stevens, *Red Onions Jazz Band,* 26.

public alike. Aside from his vociferous advocacy for a stringent definition of jazz, which styles of jazz were worthy, and indeed which musicians were worthy, Miller established essential infrastructure in and around the Australia jazz scene. His founding of the *Ampersand* record label produced Australia's first jazz recordings. Miller also set up two journals, *Jazz Notes* and the *Australian Jazz Quarterly*[30], which at different periods devoted to the promotion of (largely American) jazz within Australia – invaluable documents of the attitudes, aesthetics and aspirations of Australia's jazz musicians.[31]

Miller was somewhat of an arbiter of taste, and remains a crucial guidepost when attempting to trace the threads that led to a general agreement on 'real jazz', such as it came to be referred to among certain circles of jazz musicians and the jazz-consuming public during the initial post-war period.[32] Miller's exclusionary approach to jazz criticism, and the pulpits he afforded himself and others from which to proselytise render him extremely important in discussions of the shaping of Australian jazz, particularly when discussing the corpus of models which were chosen by Australian musicians. As Miller's sense of what was 'proper' and what was not came to be viewed virtually as a creed to be adhered to, his weight in creating a framework for pre- and post-war jazz practitioners in Australia cannot be ignored. Along with the establishment of the *Australian Jazz Convention,* Miller was at the epicentre of arguably the most critical defining period of Australian jazz.

[30] William H. Miller, *Australian Jazz Quarterly*. William H. Miller, Melbourne, 1946-57.
[31] The two journals referenced here, *Jazz Notes* and the *Australian Jazz Quarterly,* were both highly significant in the shaping of attitudes towards traditional jazz among Australia's jazz musicians, and the jazz consuming public. They were not only a platform for Miller to express his views, but were also a forum in which musicians argued their respective viewpoints, with responses taking up many column inches and often being serialised.
[32] Bisset, *Black Roots, White Flowers,* 115.

In addition to *Australian Jazz Quarterly* and *Jazz Notes*, which both dealt with the Australian jazz scene more broadly, several other publications were consulted throughout this research that provided more of a local focus, including magazines, newspaper articles, reviews, critiques, newsletters, booklets, program notes, archives of APRA records, personal correspondence, and transcribed interviews both with Pearce and with his contemporaries. To have access to such a wealth of primary and secondary sources was extremely fortunate, to say the very least, and I am extremely grateful to Jan Kuplis for the access she afforded me to her archives.

Two other works feature at the centre of the relevant literature that exists concerning Ian Pearce. The first is Jan Kuplis's biographical work on Pearce[33]. As the title suggests, this work explores the sociological side of Pearce's life, and sheds much light on his environment, upbringing, musical tastes, and is a great source of chronological happenings, including a comprehensive discography. It is hoped that this exegsis will complement Kuplis's work by shedding light on Pearce's playing from more of a musicological standpoint. In addition, Kuplis produced another similar tome on Tasmanian musician Tom Pickering (who was in fact her uncle), who was inextricably linked to Pearce – the two performed together for over 70 years[34]. Both of these works have been invaluable.[35]

Technical texts consulted throughout the course of this research include *The Jazz Piano Book* and *The Jazz Theory Book*, both by Mark Levine, and *The Complete Book of Harmony,*

[33] Jan Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman: An Account of the Life and Times of Tasmania's Gentleman of Jazz,* 2015.
[34] Kuplis, *Tom Pickering Jazzmaker*.
[35] Kuplis was kind enough to allow me unfettered access to her archives during the process of this study, for which I am extremely grateful.

*Theory and Voicing* by Bret Wilmot. These texts provided technical and theoretical language common to jazz discourse, and assisted in the framing of the analysis of Pearce's work.

## 1.3 Methodology

The purpose of this practice-led research was to document processes of experiential learning through performance, and to investigate a case study in order to uncover a method of interpretation and reinterpretation of traditional jazz within the context of Tasmanian jazz heritage, thereby contextualizing the practice-led research. This was achieved through the examination of Ian Pearce's body of work, focusing on his later output – namely his solo work recorded on *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III*. The methodology followed in conducting this research will now be outlined, covering the selection of materials to be analysed, the process of transcription and analysis, the consideration of varying research models, and the manner of applying the research findings in a practice-led scenario.

Artist, researcher, and higher education consultant Carole Gray outlines the notions of practice-led research thusly:

> By 'practice-led' I mean, firstly, research which is initiated in practice, where questions, problems, challenges are identified and formed by the needs of practice and practitioners; and secondly, that the research strategy is carried out through

> practice, using predominantly methodologies and specific methods familiar to us as practitioners in the visual arts.[36]

While this is of course contexualised in terms of visual art, this broad definition lends itself equally well to music-centred practice-led research. It is imperative within the field of arts-based practice-led research to bear in mind both the similarities and differences in research methods and practitioner's methods. As Gray notes:

> Research should not be seen as being in conflict with practitioners' methods but an expansion of them. Perhaps separation is futile, as what we are trying to do is integrate and synthesise the best aspects of each into a critical dialogue, which needs two elements to create it: practice-led research is simultaneously generative and reflective.[37]

This language was useful when considering the steps to be taken throughout the course of this study. The generative component of this research is centred on the generation of a body of work – in the context of this research, the summative result of this takes the form of audio and audio-visual recordings which were compiled into a folio. However, the feedback loop of enquiry and reflection were of prime importance when interrogating the case study, my own artistic practice, the assimilation and integration of the discoveries, and the resulting artistic expression. Problems that arose through practice were identified as researchable, and were then examined through practice. The role of the research in this

[36] Carole Gray, 'No Guru, No Method? Discussions on Art and Design Research', University of Art & Design, UIAH, Helsinki, Finland, 1998, 3.
[37] Gray, 'No Guru, No Method?', 10.

instance is multifaceted: I had to, at various intervals, be the performer, the participant in the creative process, and an observer of the process both in real-time and upon reflection, and the investigator of a case study. This modality of investigation therefore navigates frequently between a realist ontology coupled with an objectivist epistemology (characterised by Gray as 'the positivist paradigm'[38]), and a relativist ontology paired with a subjectivist epistemology (in Gray's terms, 'the constructivist paradigm'[39]). This is to say that a methodology was derived through the researcher being aware of what they determine to be 'knowable', and their own position in relation to the 'knowable'.

Brad Haseman and Daniel Mafe identify what they term 'the six conditions of practice-led research' as follows:

1. Resolving the 'problem' of the research problem
2. Repurposing methods and languages of practice into the methods and language of research
3. Identifying and deploying emerging critical context which are networked out of his or her practice
4. Identifying and engaging with the 'professional' frames within which practice is pursued
5. Anticipating and deciding on possible forms of reporting

[38] Gray, 'No Guru, No Method?', 12.
[39] Gray, 'No Guru, No Method?', 12.

6. Deliberating on the emerging aspirations, benefits and consequences which may flow from the demands and contingencies of practice[40]

These conditions were useful in constructing a methodology for this practice-led research. Subsequently, for the purposes of this research, the following steps were taken:

1. A survey of artists as potential case studies was conducted in order to determine an appropriate model, resulting in the selection of Ian Pearce, and his mature output contained on *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III*
2. An interrogation of Pearce's circumstance was undertaken in order to locate the research, examine the role of circumstance on experiential learning, and contextualise the research output
3. Transcription and analysis was carried out in order to determine the key materials and improvisational modalities of Pearce's artistic practice
4. These key materials and modalities were reintegrated into my own artistic practice, beginning the feedback loop of generative/reflective research
5. Artefacts in the form of recordings, including commercial studio releases and live concert recordings were produced, containing material informed and influenced by the research
6. A self-reflective analysis was effected in order to shed light on the approaches used to reinterpret the research findings, the influence of the research and its

[40] Brad Haseman and Daniel Mafe, "Acquiring Know-How: Research Training for Practice-led Research" in *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts,* eds. Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean, (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2009), 214-217.

processes on my own artistic practice, and examples of the key materials and modalities uncovered by the research emerging in the recorded artefacts

A large cross-section of Australian artists was considered as the model to be used in the course of this research. Key factors in the narrowing of the selection were: a clear body of work primarily in the performance and recording of traditional jazz based music (including the performance of canonical material, and original compositions within the parameters of the genre), the suitability of recorded material for transcription, an affinity for the source material, and clear relevance to my own artistic practice.

After careful consideration, Ian Pearce was chosen as the model for this research. Aside from satisfying the key factors for selection, several other elements were favourable. Pearce was a Tasmanian, which is my place of origin and my environment of initial development. It is instructive to consider parallels in our musical development, and the divergences. Whilst I consider the *prima facie* similarities to be of consequence, a full socio-musicological examination of the ramifications and results of this is outside the scope of this research. However, it is hoped that this research may spark further investigation into the development of a regional jazz sound within Australia. Another element of Pearce's output that was considered valuable and placed this model at the forefront was his output of original works. In particular, the recording entitled *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III - Ian Pearce* which features Pearce's works exclusively in either a solo or duo setting, is the primary focus of this research as it represents Pearce's mature style, both as a performer and composer. The piano solo recordings on this release are the focus of this study as they present Pearce's mature style clearly, without any other adornment, or necessity to

accommodate a fellow musician. Given the inextricable link between Pearce's performance practice, influences, and compositional style, it is the ideal collection of recordings for a study such as this.[41]

*Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III – Ian Pearce* is also notable for its critical reception, which underscores its importance to the present study. Jim McLeod[42] has this to say:

> All pieces are recent compositions by Ian Pearce who has remained true to his first impressions in jazz. This means we have freshly composed music in the style of an earlier jazz heritage.[43]

In a review for *Mississippi Rag*, William J Schafer says:

> Pearce knows traditional jazz piano idioms thoroughly and has composed extensively. In Tasmanian Jazz Composer, Vol. III, we hear 17 original works, as either solos or duets (with young cornetist Stephen Grant or reedman Paul Furniss) that display a wide range of imaginative eclecticism. Pearce's music is whimsical, ingratiating and highly personal, while reflecting influences and homages from all around the early jazz map. Pearce has a distinct gift as a subtle but forceful

[41] To provide further support for this notion, the connection can be seen at a glance. In that Pearce had titled two of his works *Wilson's Idea*, and *Thinking About Bix*, revealing his influences clearly.
[42] McLeod was the presenter for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's programme *Jazztrack*, and an influential commentator and champion of the Australian jazz scene.
[43] Jim McLeod in Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 322.

> accompanist, and these two horn players exhibit neat insights into Pearce's writing and impressive abilities to solo effortlessly without upstaging the keyboard.[44]

Jim McLeod again, this time in the liner notes to the CD, writes that:

> This release combines the experience of Ian Pearce with the brilliance of Paul Furniss and Steve Grant both of whom move easily and naturally from one jazz style to another. I've seen them working together and appreciated the sense of respect they have to each other and the wonderful creativity that they enliven in each other. The jazz that is celebrated on this collection comes from a golden ear – the music of Joe Sullivan, James P. Johnson, Fats Waller, Bix Beiderbecke, Teddy Wilson and many others. It is a very rich tradition important to the development of all styles of jazz which followed. Continuing-traditionalist [sic] Ian Pearce present here very elegant music in a style which he hears and of which he is a master.

In order to demonstrate the incorporation of the research findings into my own artistic practice, excerpts from the portfolio submitted alongside this exegesis were examined in order to present the application and assimilation of techniques over time. These excerpts are from a mixture of commercially released recordings, and live concert recordings.

All transcriptions were completed by ear, with the highest possible degree of accuracy. As this research focuses on a pianistic model, full scores of the entire pianistic performance

[44] William J Schafer, "Review", *Mississippi Rag*, September 1997.

were transcribed into traditional notation, as opposed to the production of a simple lead sheet.[45] The notation style for this research is largely traditional – however, to provide complete accuracy of performance notation, non-traditional notation had to be employed in order to render what appear to be mild performance inaccuracies, primarily in the left hand, jazz-specific rhythmic phrasing that it is not possible to represent with traditional notation, and other inclusions in the performance that appear to be accidental and/or unintended. The transcriptions contain chord symbols where it was deemed appropriate, in order to provide an 'at-a-glance' overview of the harmonic implications of the performance. The left hand of a traditional jazz pianist is often the main harmonic driver. At times, it is impossible to be sure of exact inclusions and exclusions of notes within the left hand voicings. Every attempt has been made to ensure accurate rendering of the voicings being executed.

Given the amount of information present in many of the transcriptions, they are largely presented in a format that employs two measures per system. Where phrases of importance extend past this grouping, they are presented completely on one system. Whilst most of the works transcribed are performed with a consistent, observable pulse, there are occasional instances of rubato. As rubato performance has no regular pulse, accurate notational rendering of the rhythmic aspects of such a performance was problematic. In these instances, the phrases performed are notated traditionally, grouped rhythmically around phrase length, and marked 'rubato'. In addition, time references to the tracks were included where they will aid the reader.

[45] A 'lead sheet' is a common-practice notational standard employed by jazz musicians. It comprises a melodic line and chord symbols to represent the harmony. It is imperative that performers are familiar with genre and style prior to attempting to perform from a lead sheet. It is useful for the purposes of this research to see on the page exactly what Pearce was doing with both hands.

As the transcription of Pearce's work is of such significance to this research, all transcriptions have been included in full as an appendix to this exegesis. Interest in the transcriptions has been shown by a number of parties, including Kuplis (mentioned above), and the Australian Jazz Museum. It is hoped that this research will continue outwards and that further publication will result.

As this research deals exclusively with functional harmony and traditional musical forms, analytical approaches similar to that of Kingston[46], Stevens[47], and Hodges[48] were employed. When considering the materials, key concepts, and approaches discovered throughout this research in terms of my own artistic practice, including the reinterpretation and assimilation of these, the model employed by Haywood[49] was utilised.

Hodges builds upon Steinel[50], Swanwick[51], and Berliner[52] in building a conceptual framework within which it is possible to consider and discuss the transmission of jazz performance practice and improvisational language. Hodges terms this 'Imitation -> Assimilation -> Innovation'. He also couches this in more descriptive language: 'Aural (rote) memorisation [input] -> Analysis/Contextualisation [processing] -> Creative Expression [output].' Finally,

[46] Damien Kingston, "Free Improvisation in the Context of Repertoire Interpretation: An Applied Investigation of Derek Bailey's *Ballads.*" (PhD diss., University of Tasmania, 2017).
[47] Stevens, (2000).
[48] Glen Hodges, "The Analysis of Jazz Improvisational Language and its use in Generating New Composition and Improvisation." (PhD diss., Macquarie University, 2007).
[49] Nicholas Haywood, "Complexity Through Interaction." (PhD diss., University of Tasmania, 2014).
[50] Mike Steinel, *Building a Jazz Vocabulary: A Resource for Learning Jazz Improvisation* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard), 1995.
[51] Keith Swanwick, *Music Knowledge: Intuition, Analysis and Music Education* (New York: Routledge Falmer), 1994.
[52] Paul Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press (1994).

Hodges asks us to view this process in terms of types of learning: 'Intuitive Learning -> Cognitive Learning -> Transcendental Learning'.[53] For ease of reference, this is collated into the following table:

| Imitation | Assimilation | Innovation |
|---|---|---|
| Aural (rote) Memorisation [input] | Analysis/Contextualisation [processing] | Creative Expression [output] |
| Intuitive Learning | Cognitive Learning | Transcendental Learning |

This approach is particularly pertinent to this research, as it applies not only to music making in a broad and general sense, but is also applicable directly to the culture of assimilation that jazz performance practices requires, and provides a neat distillation of what is a complex process for the purposes of the generation of a framework for an academic discussion.

The dialectical problem that arises between the intuitive and the analytical in the assimilation of jazz performance practice and expressive musical language is given attention in Swanwick, as he states that:

> …as we know, intuitive knowledge can only grow if it is complemented by analytical mapping; and this includes identifying the 'fixed something', both channelling and extending the way we listen. 'Copying', 'imitating', are themselves acts of analysis

[53] Hodges, PhD diss., 72.

> where we sift out certain elements for attention – those things we want to emulate. Varied practice is also analytical, a way of consciously extending the dynamic library, cataloguing, classifying building up a *schema*, an action pattern.[54]

In the examining of Pearce's process for the assimilation of jazz performance practice, and for that matter my own, this codification is advantageous. Pearce placed a high degree of importance on listening. He is quoted in Kuplis when discussing advice for younger players:

> If a young person says to me, 'I like the sound of what's been played. What can I do to play like that?' I say listen to records. Listen 24 hours a day if you can. Not just listen for fun; listen and ask yourself, what's he doing? How did he get that idea? I offer to lend them Teddy Wilson records.[55]

Green observes that the practice of imitation is integral to the development of artistic expression:

> Without the experience gained from copying and covering, original work is unlikely to be convincingly situated within a style recognised as music: music is not a natural phenomenon but has to conform to historically constructed norms, both concerning its intra-musical processes, forms and sound qualities, and its modes of production, distribution and reception. Otherwise it is unlikely to be recognised as music at all …

[54] Swanwick, *Music Knowledge,* 155.
[55] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 362

> What is learnt from playing covers[56] can be adapted to fit new musical contexts, and thus provides a precursor to original invention.[57]

The following chapters in this exegesis outline the key musical influences on Pearce's performance practice, and his circumstance, before progressing to an analysis of his mature output as contained on the compact disc *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III*. Following this is a self-reflective analysis outlining the reinterpretations of the research findings as evidenced through the folio of work submitted alongside this exegesis. Finally, conclusions will be drawn and reflected upon, and further opportunities for research will be outlined. Following the conclusion, Appendix 1 contains the notated transcriptions completed through the process of this research.

[56] The term 'covers' here refers to the practice of performing existing works as per the original. In modern 'pop' and 'rock' circles, the common term is a 'covers band' which refers to a group that performs no original material, but performs standard repertoire. Within the sphere of jazz, this term is not widely used as each performance of standard repertoire is unique in that it is open to interpretation in the moment by the performers. It could be considered that the world's most successful cover bands are in fact state-sponsored symphony orchestras. Green appears to be saying that the process of preparing and performing standard repertoire is integral to the analytical mapping of style.

[57] Lucy Green, *How Popular Musicians Learn* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000).

## Chapter 2

### Key influences and circumstance

As stated above, this research concerns itself with investigating approaches to solving the problems of the assimilation of traditional jazz practices (including interpretation and reinterpretation) and the development of a unique creative voice, within in the context of Tasmanian jazz heritage. Given the artistic isolation that a burgeoning practitioner must face, the areas of outside influence (through the medium of recorded materials) and circumstance will be explored.

The concept of influence in music and on musicians is explored in Lawrence Kramer's work *Interpreting Music*, among others.[58] Kramer's take on influence is asserted earlier in the chapter pertaining to it – it is clear from early in the piece that he does not consider influence worthy of inclusion in discussions surrounding musicians and their development, labelling 'traditional' discourse surrounding influence as 'cheap'. Kramer argues that 'a theory of plural, heterogeneous relations is a theory of intertextuality, not a theory of influence.'[59] Kramer's focus is on the notion of the heroic artist struggling with their predecessor, and the reductionist thinking that has ossified around the 'classical' and 'romantic' periods of Western Art Music. This is of less use to the current study; however, it is well worth keeping in mind that influence (and by extension intertextuality) in terms of the present subject are not merely referred to in the model Kramer is espousing. Musical

[58] Kramer, Lawrence. *Interpreting music*. (University of California Press, Berkeley, Calif.; London, 2011), 113-127.
[59] Kramer, *Interpreting Music*. 119.

influences, aesthetics, extra-musical influences, and circumstance are all woven together to express the complexity of Pearce's musical development, and the subsequent depth of his musical maturity. As will be shown below, influence *per se* is not enough to tease out the fabric of Pearce's mature style.

This chapter gives itself over to the exploration of Pearce's key influences and his circumstance. It is broken down into four sections. The first section addresses Pearce's pianistic influences, and their importance to the shaping of his musical aesthetic. Subsequently, the remaining three sections link notions of extra-musical influences to notions of circumstance, commencing with Pearce's most immediate peer, Tom Pickering. Pickering was to be a musical partner to Pearce for over fifty years commencing in their teenage years, hence the importance of noting his influence on Pearce. Following on, the influence of jazz *amateur,* publisher, and record label owner Bill Miller will be explored. Miller provided crucial support and encouragement to Pearce in his development years. As will be shown, Miller was a figure of enormous influence within the Australian traditional jazz context, and he had a lasting impact on Pearce and his peers. Finally, this last section contextualises Pearce's return to Hobart through a brief overview of his travels, and the influences that exerted themselves along the way. Pearce came into contact with Graeme Bell, arguably Australia's most renowned traditional jazz practitioner, among many other notable Australian musicians through his travels, and these connections bore fruit in his eventual employment in London with George Melley and Mick Mulligan. It was during his tenure with Melley that Pearce made a decisive switch from trombone to piano.
These three parts are roughly chronological, as we view Pearce's imitation and assimilation phases in progress.

## 2.1 Pianistic influences

Pearce's style has often been compared to that of Teddy Wilson and Jess Stacy. These two pianists both rose to prominence through their association with Benny Goodman and his several musical projects, at a time when Goodman's star was on the rise. Wilson in particular was a strong and clear influence on Pearce's pianism and improvisational language, as will be demonstrated below. Wilson's style is often categorised as 'refined' and 'delicate', and this was developed and moulded through his time with Goodman, as the clarinettist attempted to generate a chamber music-like atmosphere surrounding his groups in the mid to late 1930s.[60] Wilson appears in the jazz piano lineage following Earl 'Fatha' Hines. Wilson thoroughly examined Hines's work, and incorporated it into his own performance practice initially; eventually he would reinterpret much of Hines's material in the creation of his own particular aesthetic.[61] Wilson also carefully studied Thomas Wright 'Fats' Waller's output – in particular his work *Handful of Keys*.[62] The other significant influence on Wilson was Art Tatum, upon whom he lavishes praise in his autobiography.[63] As Wilson took elements from the Harlem stride piano players, stripped them back, and fused them with his own conceptions, it could be posited that Pearce followed this path as well. Kuplis makes this observation in her biography of Pearce, and also draws a comparison of outlook and character:

[60] Ted Gioia, *The History of Jazz* (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2011), 134-135.
[61] Gioia, *The History of Jazz,* 135.
[62] Teddy Wilson, *Teddy Wilson Talks Jazz* (London: Cassell by arrangement with Bayou Press Ltd, 1996), 98.
[63] Wilson, *Teddy Wilson Talks Jazz,* 99.

> One could almost deduce from Wilson's poised and restrained manner at the piano that Ian might have also copied that. Or perhaps Ian was drawn to Wilson because he already had a similar temperament and relationship with the piano.

Jess Stacy was a further influence on Pearce. Stacy was another disciple of Hines, and also took on the influence of Wilson.[64] He would also work with Goodman, and this period was to be the most elevated in his career. Pearce acknowledged the influence of both Wilson and Stacy, but according to Kuplis:

> …he had little time for deep analyses of his or anyone else's performance. His philosophy was: "Why bother analysing – just play."[65]

This attitude towards the intellectualisation of jazz goes some way towards explaining Pearce's process in terms of imitation, assimilation, and innovation as discussed above. A tendency towards avoiding overt analysis of his own playing points towards a preference for getting the 'feeling' of the music to where he wanted it, and not worrying about the specificity of the existing body of work so much. This mentality allows for a more distinctive approach as opposed to a merely imitative one. Following on from the notion of decontextualisation explored above, this modality also contributes to the particular sound of Pearce's performance practice. Whiteoak states that:

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[64] Dobbins, Bill, and Barry Kernfeld. 2003 "Stacy, Jess." *Grove Music Online.* 28 Nov. 2018. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-2000425300.

[65] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 199.

> A significant outcome of decontextualisation is what I have termed 'imitation-ecstatic' performance practice. This is a mode of performance which seeks to present an imitation or representation of qualities that are associated with authentically ecstatic performance, such as immediacy, excitation and spontaneity.[66]

This is not to say that Pearce was not steeped in the canon, quite the contrary: he placed enormous importance on familiarity with canonical recordings, and the processing of absorbing and imitating the performances of the greats.[67] It seems that in the absence of a larger and more competitive jazz 'scene' as could be found on mainland Australia or overseas, Pearce was largely free of external pressures and could therefor imitate and assimilate as he pleased, and fashion his expressive output in the same manner. This view is supported by Kuplis:

> Whether or not it was their passion, their individual personalities or their romantic perception of American jazz exponents that prompted this ... it is certainly true that the Tasmanian jazz makers were free to wallow (up to a point) in the jazz they were playing. This luxury was in contrast to the more competitive atmosphere of the professional jazz scene, most particularly in the United States, where musicians seemed to try and out blow each other in terms of volume, speed and embellishments in order to attract the audiences they need to help cover their rent.[68]

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[66] Whiteoak, *Playing Adlib,* xiv.
[67] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 363.
[68] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman,* 283.

In his own words, Pearce outlines his general mode of operating:

> One sets the limits for oneself, by playing with sympathetic people, by using the material agreeable to the majority of the group, by supporting the other in the ensemble without losing one's own individuality, and within those limits playing exactly what one wants to play. I mean you can extend your individuality to producing 32 bars of silence if you want to. Come to think of it you might please a lot of people of [sic] you did.[69]

## 2.2 From Teddy Wilson to Tom Pickering

Ian is quoted in Kuplis's book on his influences:

> Leaving out the Louis Armstrongs and the obvious masters, there have always been a handful of musicians I admire. Teddy Wilson – always, Pee Wee Russell, Buck Clayton and I love the new traditionalists: the Bob Wilbers, Kenny Daverns, Warren Vachés, Dave McKenna and Dick Hyman. Those are the ones that are carrying the flag. I don't go out of my way to hear contemporary jazz. Every time I do hear something that's beyond my understanding and/or enjoyment, I go back to these sorts of people.[70]

[69] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 277.
[70] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 193.

That Teddy Wilson in particular was an overt influence on Pearce's style and performance practice has been demonstrated above, and will continue to be discussed in the following chapter. It is worth rendering a quote here from an interview with Kuplis (contained in her book), detailing an evening when Pearce was working in London during the early 1950s, and appeared on the same bill as Wilson. This goes some way to demonstrating Pearce's admiration of Wilson, and also the extent to which Pearce incorporated Wilson's jazz piano performance practice into his own.

> I was playing piano in the Mick Mulligan band with Teddy Wilson, who was the guest star that night, standing in the wings waiting to go on. A most inhibiting experience. I was nervously thinking how I had to play a set or two with the band while there in the wings was the person I most admire, probably thinking, 'Oh God when will they finish?'.
>
> Then I only had a brief minute with him; and all he said was 'How's the piano?' which he could have heard for himself, but it was something to say. I sort of went of pieces. I said something like, 'It's good enough for me, but you might think differently', or something like that.
>
> I've never thought about this, but he'd probably have thought 'I can hear a little bit of me in this chappy's playing … he's been listening to me a bit.' If I'd been a few years younger, I would have tried to get him aside and say how much I admired his playing – as a sort of model – and I still use him as the model for how jazz piano players should play.[71]

[71] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 121.

Alongside the obvious overt influences of the greats from which Ian derived much inspiration and input for the 'imitation' phase of his development, it is clear that Pearce's circumstances and environment, including the musicians he encountered at the local, and eventually national level, would be equally as important in shaping his musicianship and improvisational language. As is noted above, the issue of an 'Australian jazz style' and an 'Australian jazz sound' are problematic, and have been the subject of much discussion, both scholarly and otherwise. Stevens's view on a focus towards better understanding the circumstances surrounding a musician's development within Australia provides a framework within which it is possible to escape from the notion that jazz must be seen solely in terms of its American lineage and continuum. To this end, it is crucial to examine Pearce's circumstances and environment, as these are contributing factors to his mature style which this thesis is concerned with. What was not attempted was in-depth scrutiny of Australia's and Tasmania's socio-musicological environment, as this is outside the scope of this thesis. However, it is necessary to outline the influence of Pickering in particular, and the immediate environment in which Pearce was introduced to jazz, and assimilated the performance practice of the music.

Tom Pickering[72] was initially a neighbour to Pearce in their teenage years, and would be a lifelong musical partner. Pearce and Pickering would go on to perform together for almost sixty years; indeed, Pearce-Pickering (as the name of one of their longstanding groups)

[72] Pickering was a clarinetist, saxophonist, vocalist, and composer within the Tasmanian jazz scene. An overview of Tom Pickering and his early encounters with jazz can be found in Matthew Boden, "Tom Pickering: Jazz on the periphery of the periphery." *Jazz Research Journal* Volume 10, No. 1/2 (May/November 2016): 109-125, whilst Kuplis, *Tom Pickering* (2012) provides a broader sketch of Pickering's life and times.

became synonymous with Tasmanian jazz.[73] This is also borne out by Bisset, who says that "The Pearce-Pickering partnership has been a mainstay of jazz in Hobart."[74]

Pearce is quoted extensively in Kuplis (2015, p.195) regarding his musical relationship with Pickering, and the influence Pickering exerted:

> Tom was a natural leader … he had the ability to organise a bunch of creative individuals, to communicate effectively and mediate if necessary; all with gentle humour, of course, and genuine [concern]. I had the technical musical knowledge to be able to sort some of his ideas out and we worked very cooperatively in that sense, musically and personally. I've said it many times, that from the musical point of view Tom and I were left and right hand.

This notion of Pickering generating ideas and Pearce completing them is noted by Bisset:

> He [Pickering] has a nice melodic sense and often Ian Pearce harmonises his tunes for him. Pearce's classical training has a bearing on what he writes. He twists and turns an idea to make it tight within the limits he sets on it.[75]

In his own words, Pearce says "I could supply knowledge Tom didn't have and he could supply what we needed to sort of create."[76]

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[73] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 194.
[74] Bisset, *Black Roots, White Flowers,* 169.
[75] Bisset, *Black Roots, White Flowers,* 167.
[76] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 197.

Bisset points towards Pearce's time in Melbourne and the 'classical' training he underwent – this influence will be discussed below. Pickering was also influential in the choice of repertoire for the groups:

> His attitude got us playing the way we did – individually and as a group. He didn't say 'we're gonna play this whether you like it or not'. Never that sort of … it would be 'what about trying this?' You see, Tom was a great digger out of unusual material. I just went along and sorted it out sometimes. It's important to remember we didn't push this idea; it had developed into a way of looking at repertoire.

The careful, considered choice of repertoire during for the formative years of the Pearce-Pickering partnership was to have a lasting effect, and informed much of their later work. Bisset notes that:

> Years before the American film 'The Sting' appeared, they [Pearce and Pickering] spotted that no one was doing any ragtime, formed the Pearce-Pickering Ragtime Five in 1967, and aided by a willing sound engineer at the ABC, Jack Smith, recorded an LP in 1970, 'Jazzmania'.[77]

In the liner notes to this particular record, Len Barnard[78] has this to say about Tasmanian circumstance:

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[77] Bisset, *Black Roots, White Flowers,* 169.

[78] Len Barnard was an Australian jazz drummer, brother of Bob Barnard. For further information see Gould, Tony. "Barnard, Len." *Grove Music Online.* 10 Dec. 2018. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-2000027400.

> "All the years of isolation from the mainland have developed an originality, a homogenous unity, and a complete lack of forced pretension in Tasmanian Music. Tom, for one, has been like a jazz naturalist, hacking his way through a jungle in search of peculiar specimens, which, if not hitherto discovered, are yet certainly not on the usual syllabus."

This desire to search out the 'tunes less travelled' set Pearce and Pickering apart, from the initial Australian Jazz Convention in 1946 and through their subsequent careers.
Kuplis notes:

> From the first convention onwards, the mainland musicians were impressed with the sort of material Ian and Tom were playing. Although, as Ian said, 'they were probably better players than we were, individually and as a band', they were playing more of the jazz standards, while Tom was seeking out obscure and the forgotten gems [sic] – tunes the other bands admitted they wouldn't have thought of playing.[79]

This is borne out by Bisset:

> Tom Pickering and Ian Pearce rejected the exclusive 'trad' label and aimed for a looser style; they retained traces of the small swing groups of the thirties which

[79] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 196.

> inspired their love of jazz and they have been noted for using tunes which are rarely played by others.

Pearce and Pickering were both influenced by the music of the period in which they entered their teenage years. Boden states:

> During their teenage years in the mid-1930s, Pickering and his peers first encountered 'hot' music through the medium of radio. Records were the other key medium via which jazz could be absorbed. … Pickering and his peers would not wait insignificant periods for ordered records to arrive. In 1934, the year in which Pickering became interested in the popular music of the day, Hobart had just one shop that sold records. Despite this restriction in supply, Pickering was able to purchase records of interest, including cuts by Bob Crosby, Teddy Wilson, Benny Goodman, Louis Armstrong, Wingy Malone, Duke Ellington and Bud Freeman among others.[80]

This approach to the 'input' phase of assimilating jazz performance practice, and the environment in which they were placed gave rise at once to a specialisation in the music surrounding their years of development, and to a particular *modus operando* that was to be noted by their peers. In 'Network News'[81] local Hobart drummer and musical peer Greg 'Alf' Properjohn is quoted as saying:

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[80] Matthew Boden, "Tom Pickering: Jazz on the periphery of the periphery." In *Jazz Research Journal* Volume 10, No. 1/2 (May/November 2016): 109-125.
[81] Alf Properjohn, *Network News*, Issue 9, November-December 1983.

> To this day I find their knowledge of jazz of the '20s to late '40s to be remarkable. … It's fascinating to reflect that, as they had no outside influences, no other live jazz to listen to, the band embarked on a musical course that they still follow, i.e. style doesn't seem to bother Tom or Ian much – as long as the music swings, they'll play anything from a 'Trad Jazz' tune to a music hall or vaudeville number.

Again, circumstance and environment exert influence over the musical choices and assimilation and contextualisation processes of Pearce. It seems clear that this period of imitation and assimilation are shaped by Hobart's relative isolation from the rest of the Australia, and indeed the rest of the world. Whether or not a deliberate attempt was made to consecrate a definite style was a question that would be posed to Pearce many times over the course of his career. Kuplis notes that:

> Did they ever consciously collaborate to develop a particular style or sound? It was a question Ian had often been asked by interviewers over the years, but he gave it due thought one again, then submitted: "I don't know if we ever created a style, or it was the fact of Tom's ability and interest to pick out the material," he said candidly. Then, after a moment's careful through he added: "Tom was a natural influence. And in hindsight, I think that without Tom's influence, although we mightn't've recognised it at the time, we well might have gone off in any direction, especially me – I might have become a professional!"[82]

[82] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce* Pianoman, 196.

It is worth noting Pearce's apparent disparagement of the 'professional' musicians that were present in his earlier years. There was a marked divide in taste and aesthetic between Pearce and his peers, and the 'working professionals' of the Hobart music scene during the '30s and '40s. For further discussion of this see Boden.[83]

Continuing the idea of circumstance as a determining factor in his approach to the assimilation of the music and the eventual performance practice, Pearce notes that:

> It was Tom's attitude that got us playing the way we did – individually and as a group. We could easily have got flashier, but we would never really have. I think it was in the nature of the environment at the time. Early on, the only competition were the dance bands who we occasionally played with in one situation or another, but very few, if any, of those players were showy. That came a bit later as rivalry developed from other sources.[84]

It is clear from the foregoing that Pickering was a key influence on Pearce. In a revealing quote from an interview with Kuplis, Pearce reflects on his musical relationship with Pickering ten years after his passing:

> Tom was a very simple player – he wasn't a Benny Goodman or a Pee Wee Russell as an inventive player. He always produced a beautiful sound on clarinet and sax. As a piano player you could work with Tom so comfortably – you would get a surprise

[83] Boden in *Jazz Research Journal* (2016), 121.
[84] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 72.

> sometimes what came out [sic] – but mostly just comfortably [sic] and you feel happy just decorating or just driving it along or whatever the mood of the piece you're playing. With a person like Davern or Tom Baker – they tend to challenge. Tom would never challenge anybody. Musically or otherwise. Whoever you were playing with – as far as our group is concerned – [it] felt comfortable and you sat back and enjoyed it.[85]

## 2.3 Bill Miller

Another key influence on Pearce's musical development was that of the barrister and jazz *amateur* William H. (Bill) Miller. Miller is a central figure in the history of jazz in Australia, playing a large role in shaping the tastes of musicians and the public alike. Aside from his vociferous advocacy for a stringent definition of jazz, which styles of jazz were worthy, and indeed which musicians were worthy, Miller established essential infrastructure in and around the Australia jazz scene. His founding of the *Ampersand* record label produced Australia's first jazz recordings. Miller also set up two journals, *Jazz Notes* and the *Australian Jazz Quarterly*, which at different periods devoted to the promotion of (largely American) jazz within Australia – invaluable documents of the attitudes, aesthetics and aspirations of Australia's jazz musicians.[86]

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[85] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 196.

[86] The two journals referenced here, *Jazz Notes* and the *Australian Jazz Quarterly,* were both highly significant in the shaping of attitudes towards traditional jazz among Australia's jazz musicians, and the jazz consuming public. They were not only a platform for Miller to express his views, but were also a forum in which musicians argued their respective viewpoints, with responses taking up many column inches and often being serialised.

Miller was somewhat of an arbiter of taste, and remains a crucial guidepost when attempting to trace the threads that led to a general agreement on 'real jazz', such as it came to be referred to among certain circles of jazz musicians and the jazz-consuming public during the initial post-war period.[87] Miller's exclusionary approach to jazz criticism, and the pulpits he afforded himself and others from which to proselytise render him extremely important in discussions of the shaping of Australian jazz, particularly when discussing the corpus of models which were chosen by Australian musicians. As Miller's sense of what was 'proper' and what was not came to be viewed virtually as a creed to be adhered to, his weight in creating a framework for pre- and post-war jazz practitioners in Australia cannot be ignored. Along with the establishment of the Australian Jazz Convention[88], Miller was at the epicentre of arguably the most critical defining period of Australian jazz.

Miller was a strong early influence on Pearce, providing critical feedback at key points in his development. Pearce states:

> "We'd [The Barrelhouse Four] sent him a copy of 'Memphis Blues' and 'Tin Roof Blues', I suppose just to show, and he wrote a serious criticism saying it was rather good and to watch out for this or that. He was encouraging, anyway, as well as being constructively critical, and said if we could get some tunes recorded and they turned out OK, he would release them."[89]

[87] Bisset, *Black Roots, White Flowers,* 115.
[88] The Australian Jazz Convention, commonly abbreviated to the AJC, was established in 1946 as a meeting place for performers. It is the longest running jazz festival of its kind in the world.
[89] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 41.

Pearce goes on to say:

> I always think that apart from his friendliness and helpfulness, he could have been Australia's only serious jazz critic because he had a very perceptive understanding of jazz and I don't think there ever has been a critic of any real worth in Australia apart from Bill.

This is supported by Bisset, who refers to Miller as he "…whom the traditionalists call the 'Dean' of jazz critics."[90] Miller was a great support to the Tasmanian musicians among Pearce's immediate musical peers, in turn publishing them (*Jazz Notes*, one of Miller's publications noted above and being first published in 1941, contained in its first issue an article concerning New Orleans authored by Tom Pickering), and then recording some works of the Barrelhouse Four (Pearce's first group) on his *Ampersand* record label.[91]
Whilst Miller was an influence and a support to Pearce during his early development, and was crucial in helping form an aesthetic, his influence appears to be limited to the years spanning 1939 through to roughly 1950.[92] Miller released another round of recordings on *Ampersand* recorded in 1946 - this recording (entitled *Ampersand 6*) was the first commercial release by a Tasmanian jazz band.[93] During a radio interview in 2011, Pearce notes of this record:

[90] Bisset, *Black Roots, White Flowers,* 115.
[91] Bisset, *Black Roots, White Flowers,* 116-119.
[92] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 60-64.
[93] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 62.

> This is my composition – what do they call them in the poetry world – infant effusions or something like that? It's just a blues-based stompy thing. I won't listen to it with any pleasure, but I'll listen with interest.[94]

The critical reaction at the time was far from pleasant or encouraging. It is worth rendering in full here in order to provide some context as to the style of critique that was presented within the pages of the Australian jazz circulars. The following is an article from the *Jazz Notes* of March, 1947, reviewing *Ampersand 6*[95]. The contributor is Dave Dallwitz who was a pianist, composer, artist, and band leader of the Southern Australian Jazz Group.

> In case any of you are thinking I am a bit of a numbskull, let me hasten to assure you that this is not the real Pickering. These incredibly shocking solo choruses come from the nervous or the disgusted Pickering. Not that that entirely excuses him. Anyone who can play so badly for so long deserves the utmost condemnation irrespective of his mental or spiritual condition.
>
> Ian Pearce contributes his share towards a thoroughly worthless record by managing to blow sharp when Pickering blows flat, or vice versa. Nevertheless, being a more stolid player and with less pretensions to technique, he is incapable of falling to the depths that Pickering does.
>
> Rex Green, although he seems very startled whenever he finds himself left with a solo, is almost worth listening to.

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[94] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 63.

[95] *Ampersand 6* is a recording of The Barrelhouse four with the following line-up: Ian Pearce (trumpet), Tom Pickering (clarinet), Rex Green (piano), and Cedric Pearce (drums).

> The ensemble work is well down to standard, being thoroughly uncoordinated, although one gets a glimpse of brighter things in the last all-in of Jazz Walk.
> I sincerely hope that those of you who have not heard the Tasmanian Devils in the flesh will believe me when I say that when on form Pick [sic] is almost the best clarinet we have, and that Pearce (although he needs tuition from a good teacher and six months in a brass band) has the right idea about jazz, and that Rex Green is among the three best pianists in Australia. I hope you will, but I know you won't.
> If these boys heard this disc before they allowed Uncle Bill [Miller] to get his hands on it, I heartily condemn their critical faculties. If the G.O.M. thinks that he can bank on jazz lovers buying further Ampersands without first hearing them, he is mistaken.[96]

In the issue of *Jazz Notes* that followed, Miller defended his decision to release the disc, stating that "After eight sides had been recorded, it was thought better to put out the two least mediocre [tunes] rather than that such an important group as the Barrelhouse Four should be unrepresented on record."[97]

Miller's influence on Pearce was to wane following the end of the Second World War, as Pearce would go on to study at the University of Melbourne Conservatorium under the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scholarship, and from there would proceed to London in 1950, and would not return to Australia until 1955.[98]

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[96] Jazz Notes March 1947
[97] Jazz Notes April 1947
[98] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman,* 74-75, 102.

## 2.4 From Melbourne to London, and return to Hobart

Pearce's time at the University of Melbourne's Conservatorium coincided with a raft of other notable Australian musicians. Pearce's cohort included Peter Sculthorpe, Don Banks, Rex Hobcroft, and Keith Humble.[99] In the year above Pearce, the students who would go on to be well known within Australian music circles included Wilfred Lehmann and James Penberthy.[100] Whilst this time at the Conservatorium saw Pearce produce some European influenced works within the usual forms (symphony, string quartet, fugue, et al), other than sparking an interest in composition, this period seems to have had no real lasting influence on Pearce's jazz performance practice, and only a cursory influence on his emergent jazz compositional output.[101] Pearce preferred to spend time with the jazz players in his cohort, forming a friendship with Don Banks, and using his time at the university as an opportunity to connect with the Melbourne jazz scene, including The Bell Band.[102]

Following the inaugural Australian Jazz Convention in 1946[103], at which Pearce and his Tasmanian peers were in attendance, Pearce became more and more involved with the Bell Band[104], performing regularly in the trombone chair with the band at Melbourne's Uptown

[99] Bell and Mitchell, *Graeme Bell,* 124.
[100] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 77.
[101] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 78-85.
[102] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman,* 78-85.
[103] Further information pertaining to the Australian Jazz Convention and its influence on the Australian jazz landscape can be found in Johnston (2008, p.22) and Boden (2016).
[104] 'The Bell Band' mentioned here and above refers to the musical peers surrounding pianist Graeme Bell and his brother, the trumpeter Roger Bell. The Bells were central figures to the Melbourne jazz scene, and indeed to the broader Australian jazz scene. They were instrumental in taking jazz to what was then termed Czechoslovakia, and are also credited with a strong influence on the British jazz scene. For further information, refer to Johnson, Bruce, and Roger T. Dean. 2003 "Bell, Graeme." *Grove Music Online.* 28 Nov.

Club.[105] By the late 1940s, Pearce was a regular member of the Bell Band, although his conservatorium studies (and his attitude towards them) severely curtailed his ability to tour with the band as it began to reach greater heights of fame and recognition. Ian partook of one Australian tour[106], but was focused on completing his studies at the Conservatorium and so declined further touring opportunities.[107] Pearce was much in demand as a trombonist, and was working with multiple bands, as is evidenced in Dick Hughes's liner notes to *Australian Classic Jazz Duets*:

> Ian was also working as regular trombonist with another of Melbourne's best bands: Tony Newstead's Southside Gang. Did I say he was working like a Trojan? I remember a jazz dance night at St Kilda Town Hall in 1949 which featured only two bands – Graeme Bell's Australian Jazz Band and Tony Newstead's Southside Band and Ian played every number of every set on trombone with both bands. He had a particular feel for ensemble playing and was very much in demand.[108]

It is clear that environment and circumstance played a significant role in Pearce's musical development. From the beginnings of his interest in jazz and the exploration of this through his friendship with Pickering growing up in Hobart, through to his experiences interacting with Miller, the larger Australian jazz scene throughout the Second World War and the Australian Jazz Convention, and to his further 'street' education in jazz from playing with the

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2018. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-2000035900.

[105] Bell and Mitchell, *Graeme Bell,* 61-62.

[106] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman,* 88.

[107] Bell and Mitchell, *Graeme Bell,* 130.

[108] Ian Pearce. Liner notes for *Australian Classic Jazz Duets*, Little Arthur Productions, Frank Piscioneri. LACD04, 1995, Compact Disc.

likes of the Bells and Newstead (among many others), Pearce was firmly rooted in the first wave of jazz in Australia. From Melbourne, Peace moved to London, essentially following the lead of his friends and peers Don Banks (who was moving to England to study with Mátyás Seiber) and Ivan Sutherland.[109] Pearce's association with Graeme Bell would prove fortuitous, as not long after the Bell band arrived in England for their second tour (they arrived at the end of November 1950), Bell introduced Pearce to Mick Mulligan, the trumpeter and band leader of Mick Mulligan's Magnolia Jazz Band.[110] Pearce joined the group on trombone, but was eventually to make the switch to piano. The original pianist in the group, David Stephens, outlines the situation:

> Mick rang me up one day and said: "Good news cock we're going pro." It was Scotland and winter. But I said that we'd have to part company because I had a serious job I couldn't really give up and I had a wife and we'd probably have kids; and he said: "Quite understand cock nice knowing you."
>
> Ian had already been working out on piano in his spare time and Mick said to him: "Look cock, how'd you like to be the piano player?" and Ian said, "Oh alright then." And that was that.
>
> Ian was a thinking trombone player and played interesting stuff, but it wasn't really in tune with the very much up-front loud and raunchy kind of style of the band. Ian felt more comfortable on piano because the piano was normally playing behind the band and just stood out for a chorus and then retire again while a trombone player

[109] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 100.
[110] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 106.

> had two opening choruses and three closing choruses and a solo. I loved Ian's piano playing.[111]

George Melley (mentioned above as the lead vocalist with Mick Mulligan's Magnolia Jazz Band) also prefers Pearce on piano over the trombone:

> This was an improvement because, although he had lovely ideas, he was so nervous that he could hardly ever pull them off on trombone, essentially an extrovert instrument, whereas on piano it was just a question of hitting the right notes.[112]

Pearce's remaining time in England would be spent performing on piano. Pearce drew a line under his time as a trombonist by selling the instrument for the princely sum of three pounds.[113] During this period, Pearce married and had two children, and subsequently decided to return to Tasmania to take up a position alongside his brother Cedric who was managing Fullers bookshop in Hobart.[114] Prior to departing, Pearce received an offer to take up a position as a staff arranger for a television station, but decided against it:

> It might have been the life changing experience, assuming I could come up with the goods as an arranger; but it would have been very demanding. I don't think I had the temperament to do it. Besides, I was already committed to the bookshop.[115]

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[111] Stephens is quoted in Kuplis (2015, 117-118) but the source is unclear.
[112] George Melly, *Owning Up* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1965), 55.
[113] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 118.
[114] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 126-127.
[115] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 127.

With the transition from trombone to piano complete, and his return to Hobart, Pearce spent the rest of his life performing primarily in Hobart. He was reunited with his musical partner Tom Pickering, who declared "He came back a fully-fledged Teddy Wilson type pianist."[116] A thorough and in-depth socio-musicological study of Pearce's development from the mid 1950s through to his passing is outside the scope of this thesis. For further biographical and anecdotal information, refer to Kuplis (2015).

As evidenced above, Pearce's mature conception and output have been shaped by a number of factors: his key influences, which include the pianists Teddy Wilson and Jess Stacy, and his peers Tom Pickering and Bill Miller, and by his circumstances. Processing the imitation and assimilation phases required to begin the absorption of the traditional jazz vocabulary in such an artistically isolated place such as Tasmania presents a number of challenges, which Pearce solves in part by the 'imitation-ecstatic' approach, the careful absorption of recorded material, and a methodology of extemporisation from limited materials. The discussion of contact with figures of key importance such as Graeme Bell, Bill Miller, Tom Pickering, George Melley, and Mick Mulligan *inter alia*, to his development, both in Australia and England, sheds light on how an artist attempting to acquire a grasp of traditional jazz styles can begin to craft an artistic aesthetic. Pearce's return to Hobart is of key importance. From this moment, he was based in Tasmania for the rest of his musical career, continuing the processes of imitation, assimilation, and subsequently, expression. The consequences of following this particular modality in such artistic isolation as Hobart offers were to impact Pearce's musical aesthetic. Pearce's circumstance, and his immediate

[116] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 140.

peer group in Hobart had an influence on the formation of his interpretation, and ultimately on his mature output. Further speculation as to the nature of a Tasmanian interpretation and reinterpretation of traditional jazz will be explored in the conclusion of this exegesis. Having experienced some external input through his travels, Pearce now turned to the Hobart jazz scene and his former peers to continue the development of his aesthetic. As will be demonstrated in the following chapter, Pearce's mature output displays a unique artistic voice, that is informed not only by the traditional jazz language itself, but also by his circumstances. This thesis will now turn to a musicological discussion of Pearce's mature style and improvisational language, as evidenced through transcription and analysis.

# Chapter 3

## Analysis of Pearce's mature style

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse Pearce's mature style, and determine the key materials utilised by Pearce that form his interpretive and improvisational jazz performance practice. This chapter will concentrate on the minutiae of Pearce's materials and will consider melodic devices, harmonic devices, rhythmic devices, and idioms of pianistic technique through the examination of several transcriptions from *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III – Ian Pearce*.

### 3.1 Left hand

When analysing Pearce's output, historical contextualisation is important. Pearce, by his own admission, is situated firmly within the traditional jazz prism, stretching over into the mainstream:

> I call myself a traditionalist in the true sense and I never was a revivalist. I'm not interested in the avant garde or any of that; I can't play it and have no temperamental feeling for it. And I don't like rock rhythms, electronic carry-on and Latin American rhythms, except odd bits which come into jazz every now and again. The people I admire now are those I call modern-traditionalists, such as Hyman, Soprano Summit, Dave McKenna and Scott Hamilton. A few years ago there really weren't people like that. Not only was there the traditionalist-modernist split, but the mainstream thing, which was Buck Clayton and Ruby Braff and people like that.

> But I think even that got into a stylistic rut on record, interminable twelve-bar things with a few riffs. I like nice tunes and nice improvisations.[117]

For this analysis, the methodology is in part adopted from John Mehegan's overview of early jazz piano styles, as outline in his work *Jazz Improvisations 3: Swing and Early Progressive Piano Styles*.[118]

Mehegan makes many useful observations of the jazz pianistic developments in the former half of the 20th century, and some of his terminology is adopted here.[119] One particular term must be clearly defined here, as it underpins the approach taken by Pearce, and labelled by Mehegan. Mehegan refers to the notion of 'swing bass', and states that this became known as 'stride' or 'Harlem' piano.[120]

> In the twenties a new style of swing-bass piano developed in Harlem, which became known as 'Harlem' or 'stride' piano. The term stride evolved from the use of a single note in the deep bass 'striding' up to the swing chord. By using the single note, the stride pianists were able to achieve an even more incredible speed in their left-hand motion. This, the use of the single note permitted more freedom in the harmonic functions of the left-hand since only the extended fifth finger was necessary to strike the bass note reducing the 'travelling' distance of the left-hand movement, particularly in striking the black keys. This advantage further allowed for more

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[117] Pearce interviewed in Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 273.
[118] John Mehegan, *Jazz Improvisation 3: Swing and Early Progressive Piano Styles* (New York: Watson-Guphill Publications, 1964).
[119] For an overview of Mehegan's take on early jazz piano styles see the introduction to the aforementioned text, 12-14.
[120] Mehegan, *Jazz Improvisation 3,* 13.

> chromatic roots moving in more complex inverted chords than previously possible. An added asset of the single note root was an improved architectural relationship between the left and right hands by reducing the ponderous octave in the bass register.[121]

This nomenclatural definition is also evidenced in Teddy Wilson's autobiography, when is referring to the developments that Fats Waller contributed:

> Technically, you could say Fats added a few things: using the left hand 'stride' bass or 'swing' bass, where the bass note alternates with an after-beat chord, Fats used the 10th as his bass note: a span of ten notes in the scale between the little finger of the left hand and the thumb.[122]

For the purposes of this analysis, the terms 'stride' and 'swing-bass' can be considered interchangeable. Following on here is a deconstruction of the materials and modalities of Pearce's mature style.

**'Swing/stride' bass**

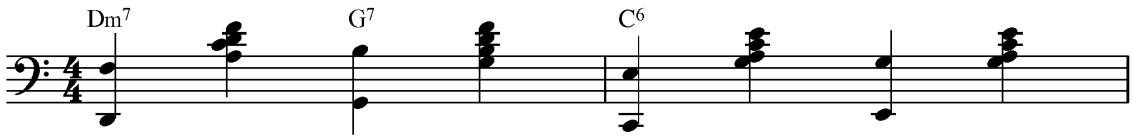
Mehegan places an extraordinary amount of importance on 'swing' bass, and goes as far as to say that 'the demise of swing-bass also spelled the end of solo piano as an exuberant and flourishing art.'[123] Whilst it is rather possible to imagine Bud Powell, Herbie Hancock, Brad

[121] Mehegan, *Jazz Improvisation 3,* 13.
[122] Wilson, *Teddy Wilson Talks Jazz,* 101.
[123] Mehegan, *Jazz Improvisation 3,* 14.

Mehldau, and Keith Jarrett in particular taking umbrage with this assertion, it seems that Mehegan is pining for a part of the tradition that has moved from foreground to background in later years.

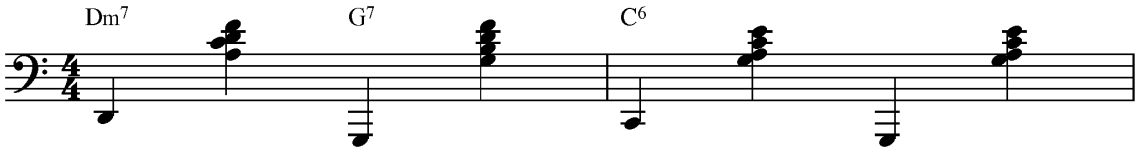
Swing-bass or stride piano can be defined as a left-hand pianistic technique that has as it basis an alteration between a low register note or notes on strong beats in a measure, and chords in the middle register on the weak beats. Figure 1 below shows this:

*Figure 1*




Variations of course are possible and inevitable, either employing tenths on strong beats as above in figure 1, or using single notes, as below in figure 2:

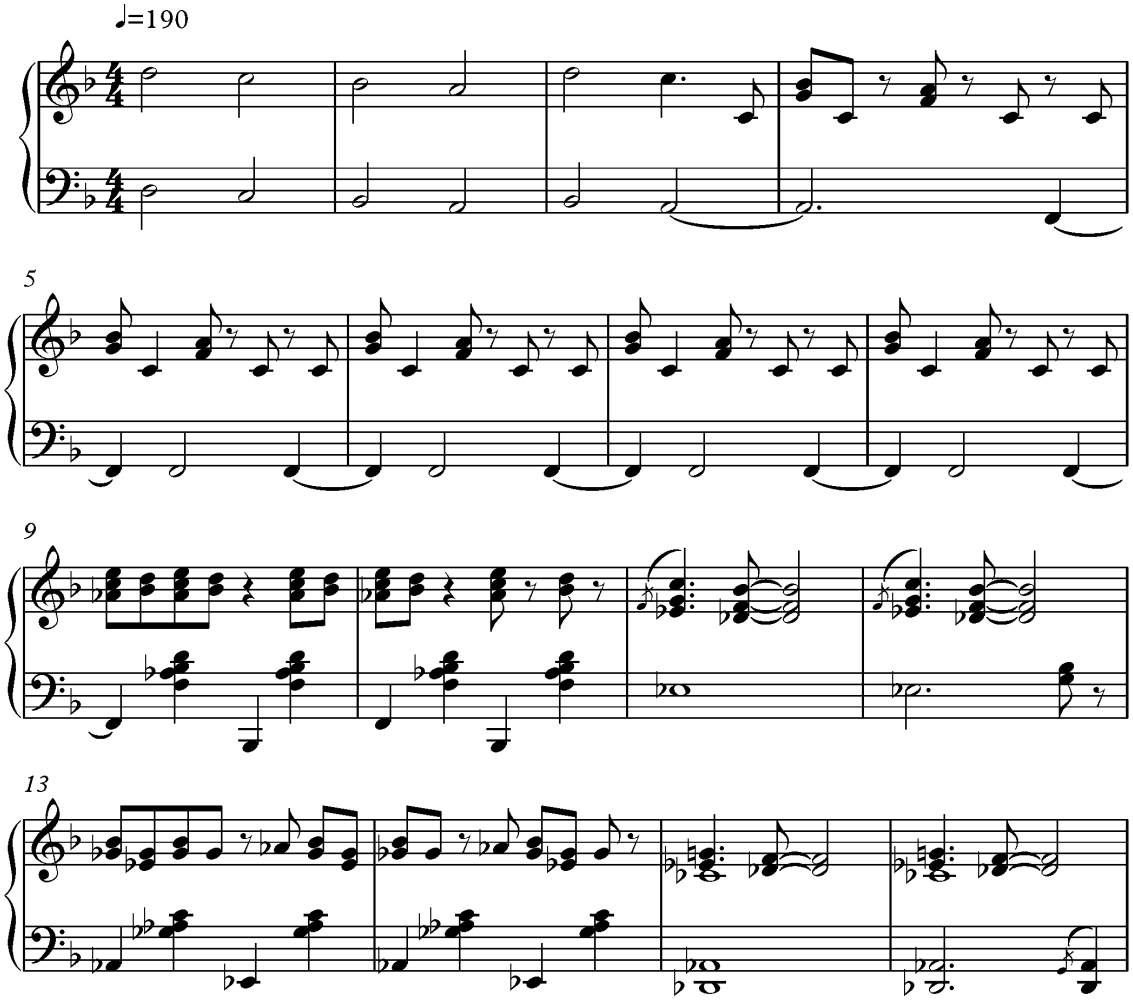
*Figure 2*




Further variations of the generic swing-bass or stride piano style will be discussed through the harmonic and rhythmic variations outlined below.

Pearce's mature style presents this device in several areas, either as part of a composition, or as an underpinning for an improvisation. In his composition *The Caper of Commerce* Pearce employs this device compositionally, balancing it against a slower harmonic rhythm in the left hand, providing variation and rhythmic drive. Figure 3 below shows the opening 16 measures of this work.

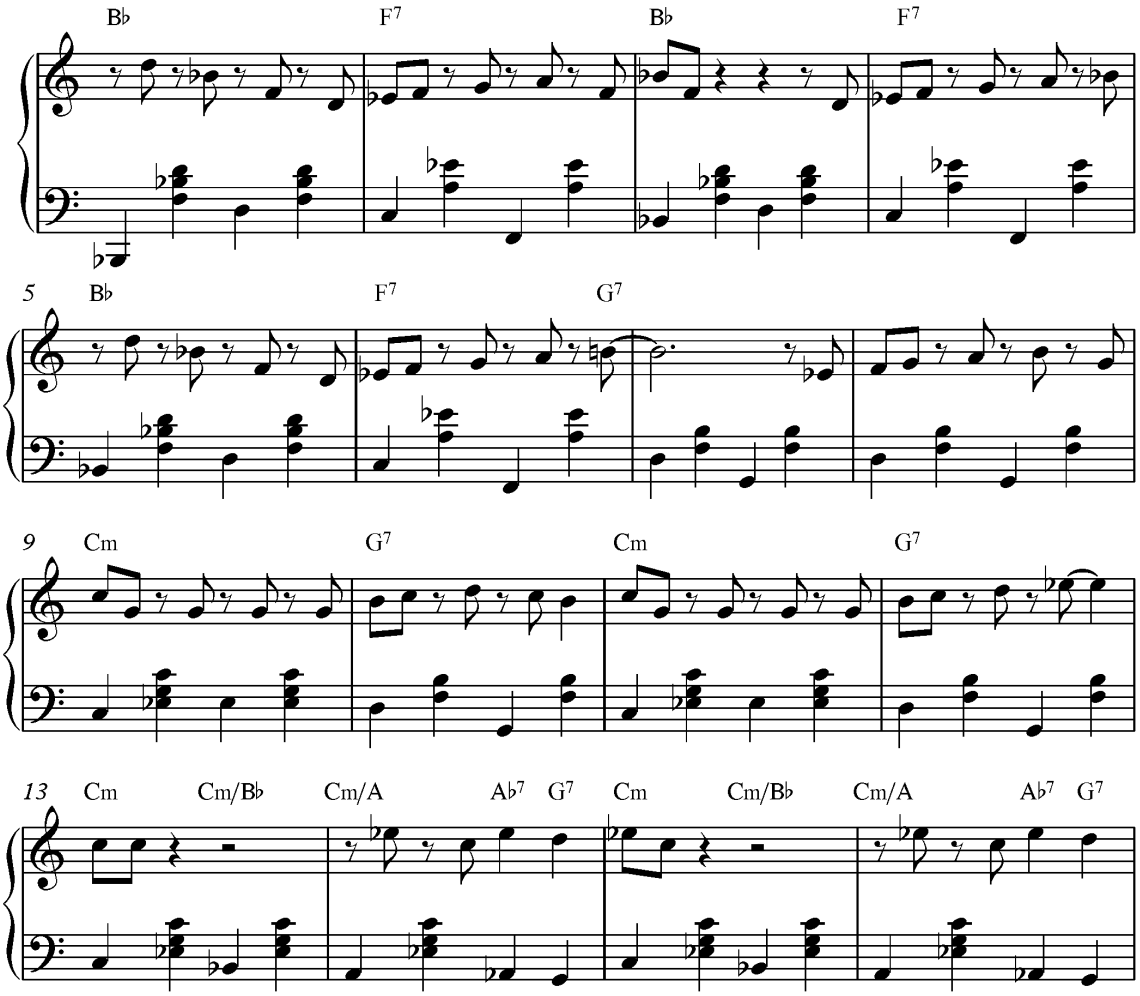
*Figure 3*




In *Whatnot* Pearce employs this device throughout the work, with the exception of measures 21 to 24 in the melody, and the stop-chorus. The stride patterns employed here

are traditional, and the standard pattern is adhered to for the most part. Below in figure 4 are the opening 16 measures from *Whatnot*:

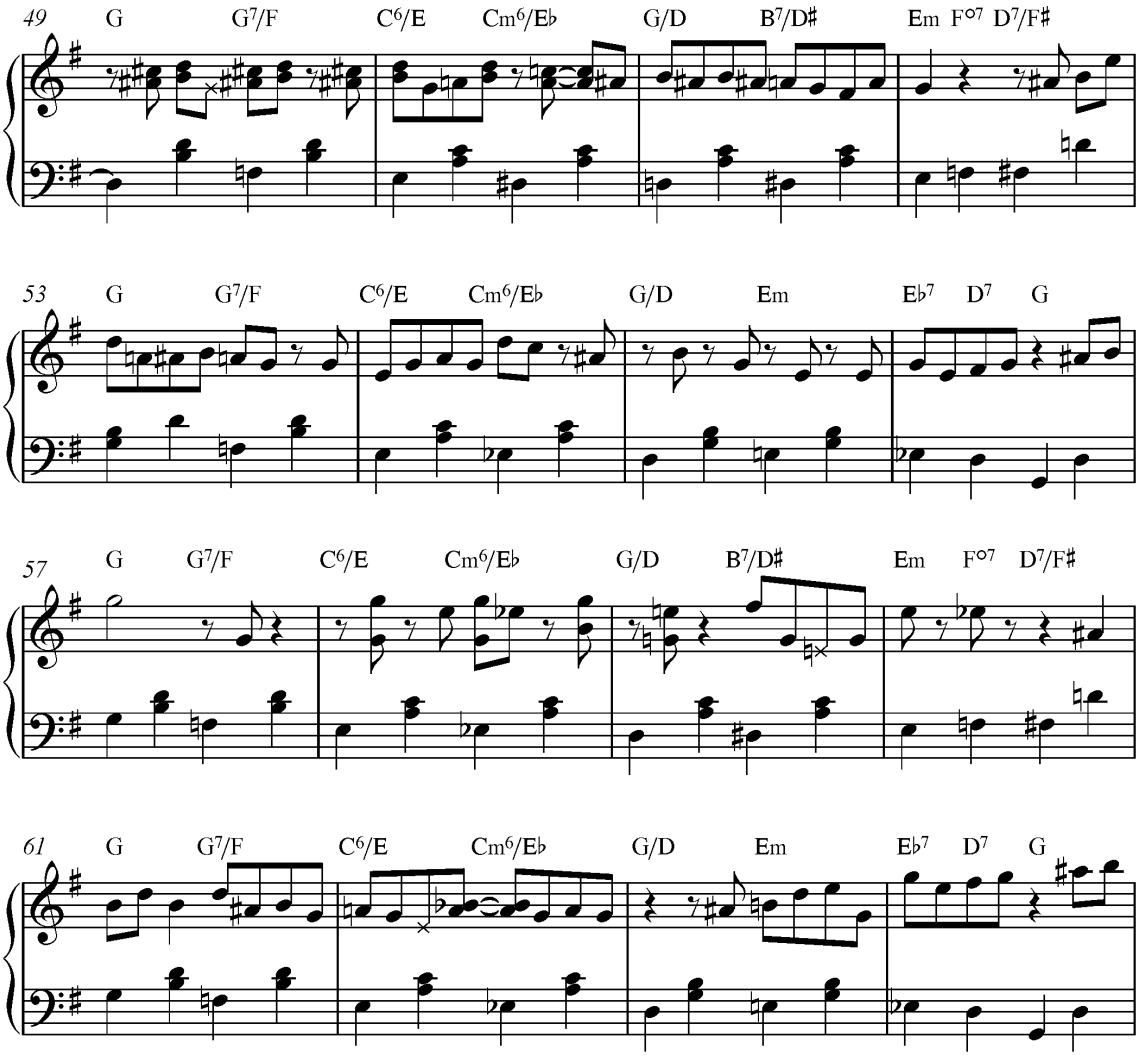
*Figure 4*




In *A Little Something*, Pearce uses stride piano as a texture change and rhythmic driver when he transitions from written material to improvisation. Here, however, the lower notes in the left hand form a counter melody that outlines the harmonic movement of the work. This particular type of countermelody could perhaps be considered a holdover influence from Pearce's time on the trombone. This melodic movement would not be out of place in the trombone part of a traditional New Orleans style front line group

improvisatory passage. Figure 5 below shows the beginning of the improvisatory section in *A Little Something*:

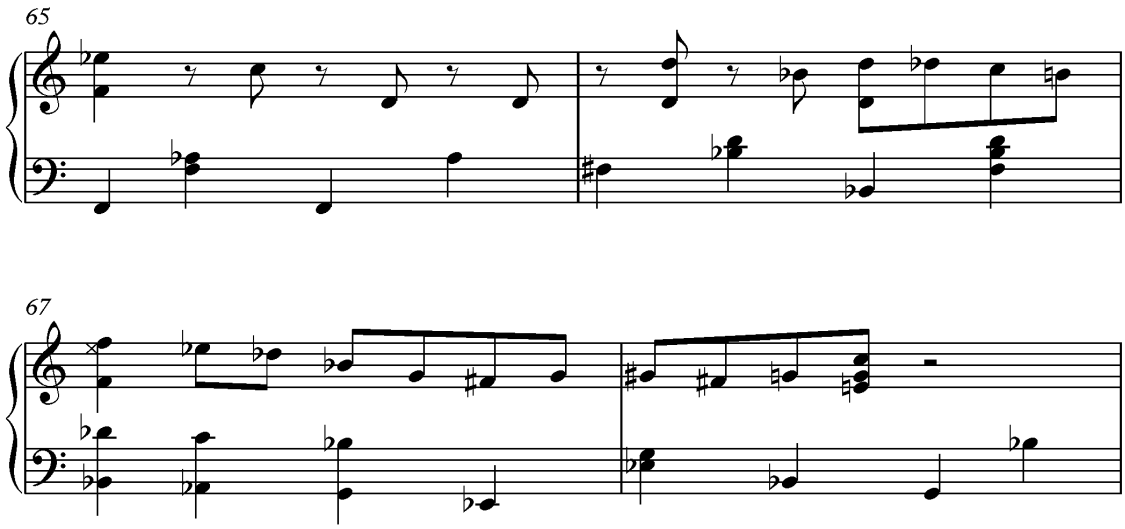
*Figure 5*




Pearce's use of this variation is in itself a variation of Wilson's left hand devices, wherein tenths are used to create harmonic movement. This will be evidenced below.

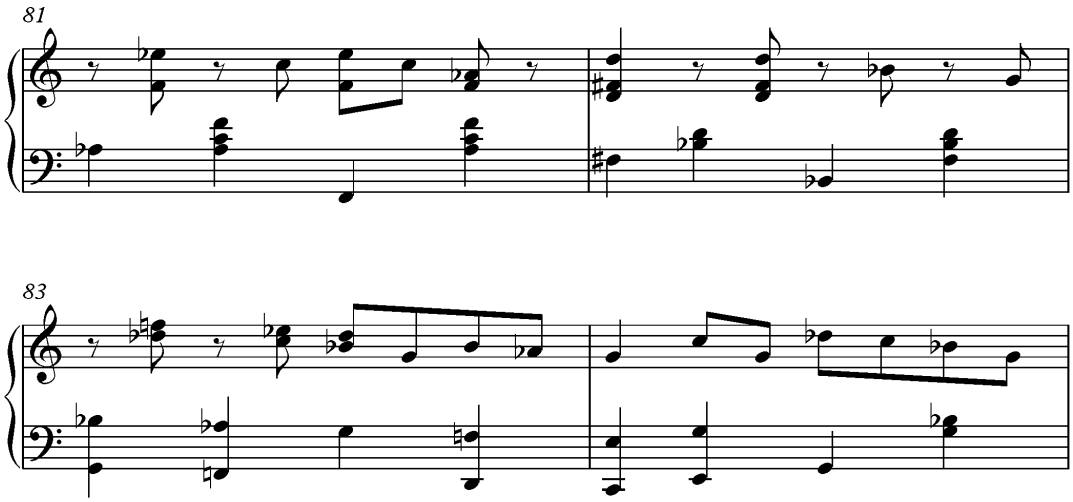
Another example of Pearce's employment of stride piano is in his work *Thinking About Bix*. During the course of this performance, Pearce moves into stride only momentarily, providing a textural change, and a shift in the rhythmic intensity of the work. Throughout the rest of the work, the left hand is providing harmonic underpinning at a slower rate, or playing composed motives that repeat. Pearce launches into stride in two places, firstly at measure 65:

*Figure 6*




and again at measure 81:

*Figure 7*

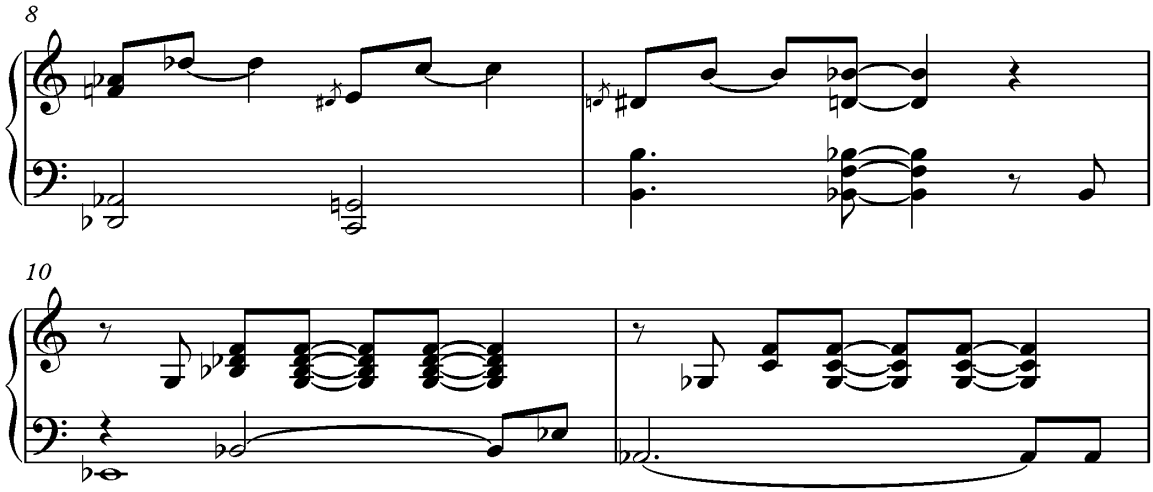


Whilst Pearce's mature style rarely employs stride as the sole rhythmic device in the left hand, it was nevertheless clearly absorbed and implemented as an essential facet. Part of Pearce's mature style is the integration and deployment of many and varied left hand techniques, with stride piano technique informing a part of this.

**Thirds, tri-tones, fifths, and sevenths**

These intervallic devices in the left hand formed further part of the pianistic language of the stride pianists.[124] Pearce uses these intervals, often as half notes, whole notes, or longer, as part of a composed section, or to provide an underpinning for a slower harmonic movement. In *Blue Shadows*, fifths are used (together and broken) to underpin the harmony present in the right hand:

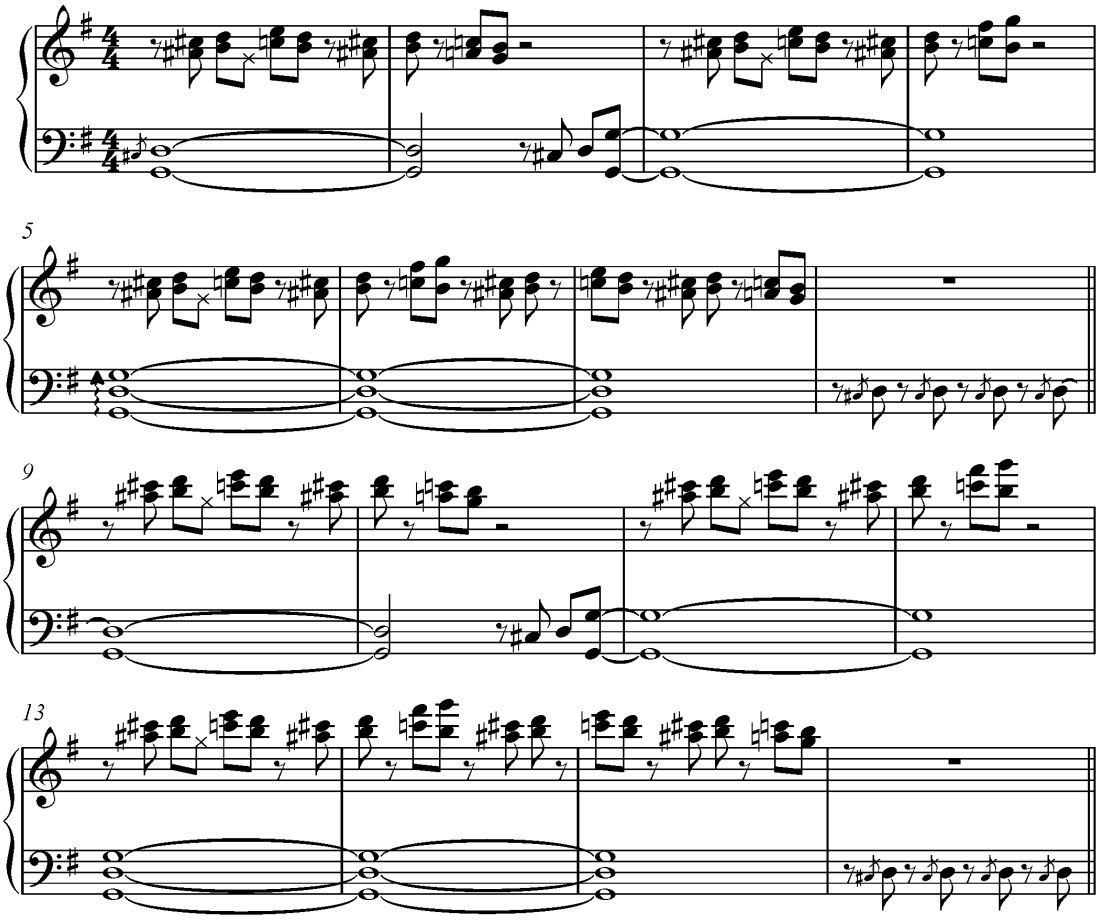
*Figure 8*




[124] Mehegan, 42.

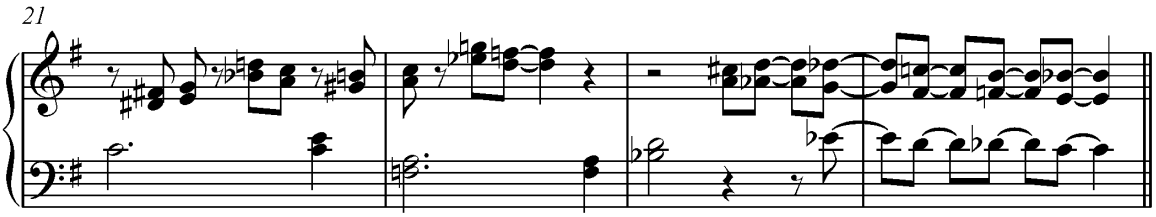
In *A Little Something*, fifths are again used to highlight a slower harmonic rhythm, and underpin the right hand figure:

*Figure 9*



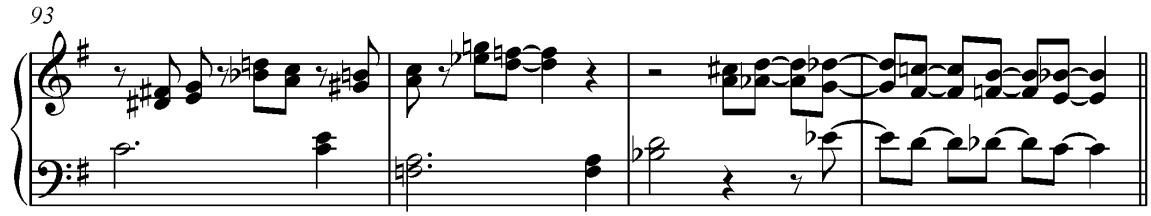

The interval of a third is also employed in this work, to outline the harmony in the left hand (overleaf):

*Figure 10*



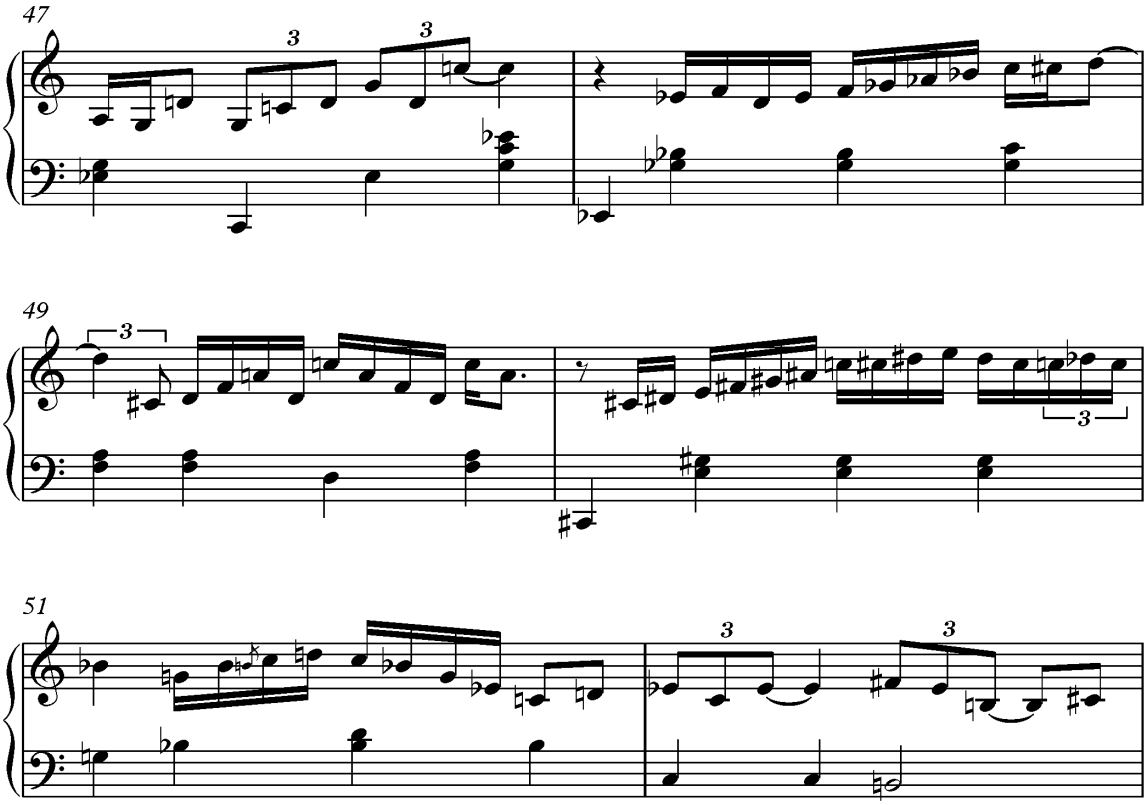

This exact figure appears towards the end of this work in the composed section, making clear its importance to Pearce's conception, as opposed to being an improvised choice:

*Figure 11*



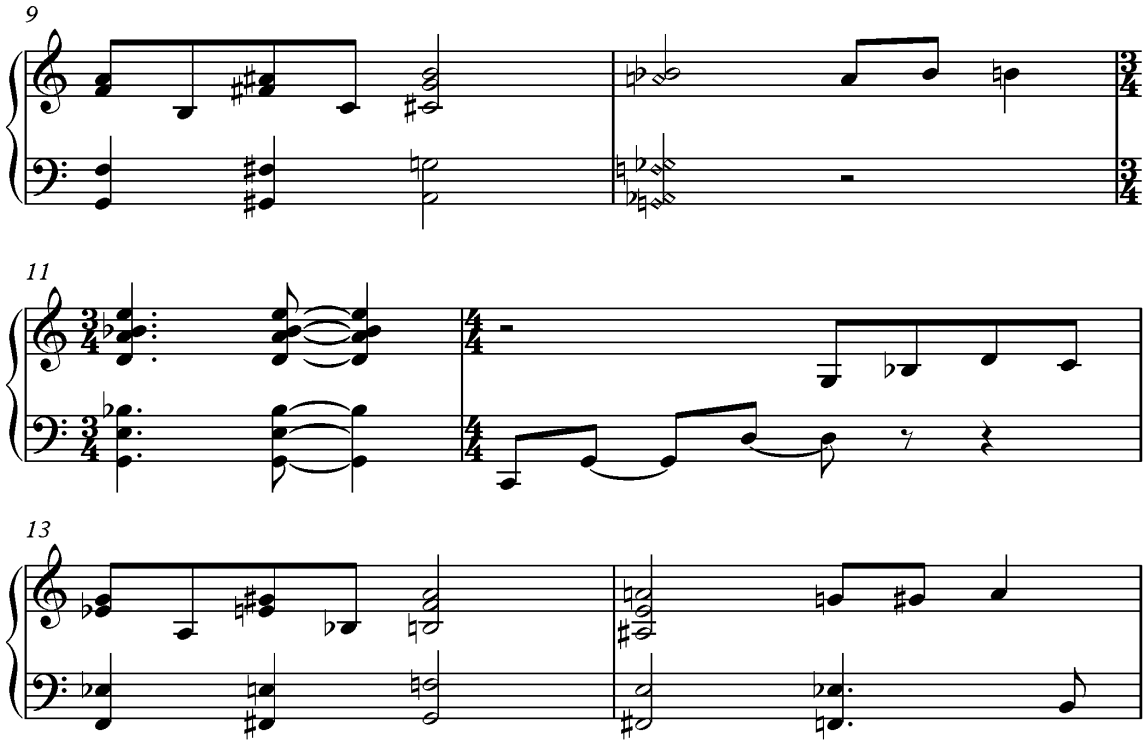

A clear example of Pearce's use of thirds appears in *Warm Afternoon* (overleaf):

*Figure 12*



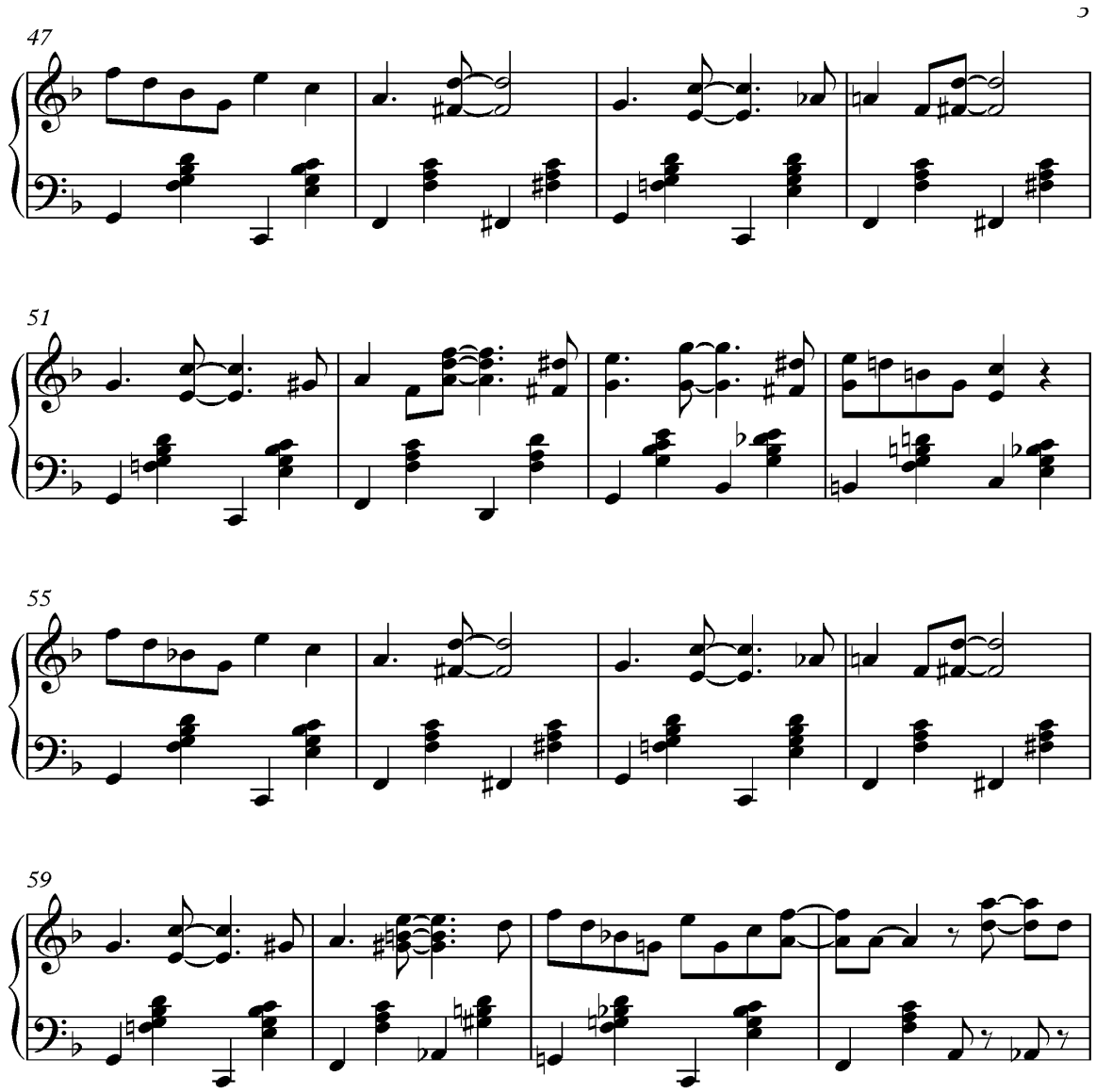

Sevenths appear as part of Pearce's mature style in *Thinking About Bix*. Here, the sevenths are underpinning more extended harmony in the right hand (overleaf).

*Figure 13*



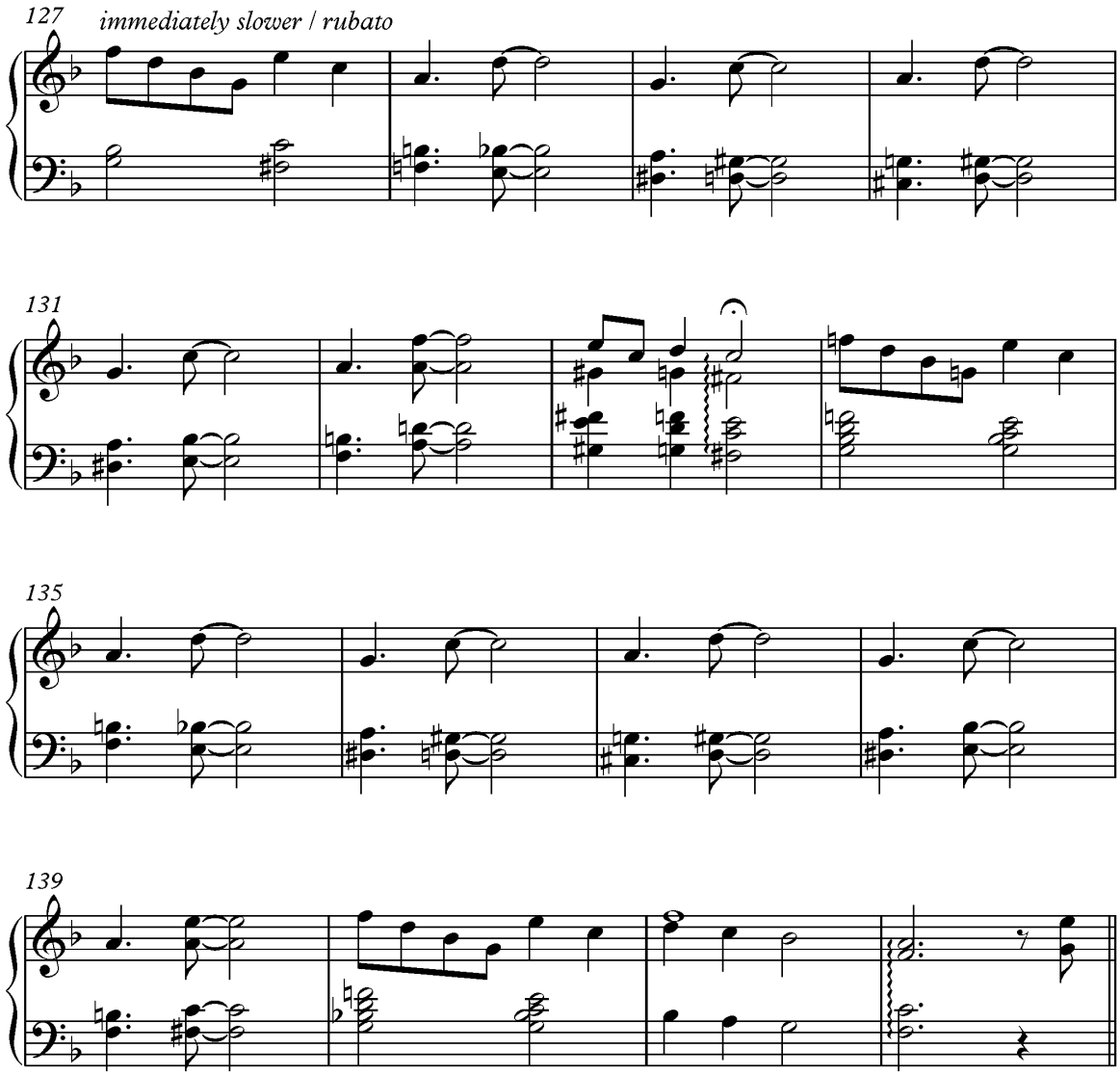

The interval of a tri-tone is in evidence as an element of Pearce's mature style in *The Caper of Commerce*. Here, Pearce uses the tri-tone in order to re-harmonise the melodic material from the second strain of the work. The original melodic material is present with more traditional stride piano (overleaf):

*Figure 14*




When this material reappears towards the end of the track, Pearce reimagines the harmony by employing tri-tones in the left hand:

*Figure 15*



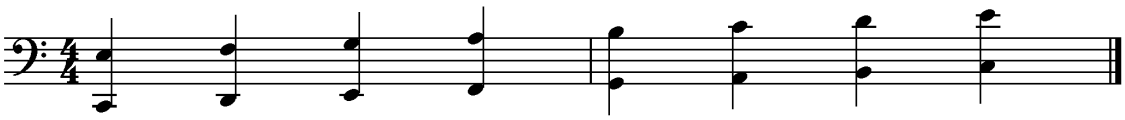

**Tenths**

Tenths are a crucial element of traditional jazz piano. Art Tatum, Fats Waller, Early Hines, Jess Stacy, and Teddy Wilson all employed tenths in their left hand conceptions. Pearce adopted their usage as well, and his employment of tenths will be broken down into three principal categories: diatonic, chromatic, and broken.

a) Diatonic tenths

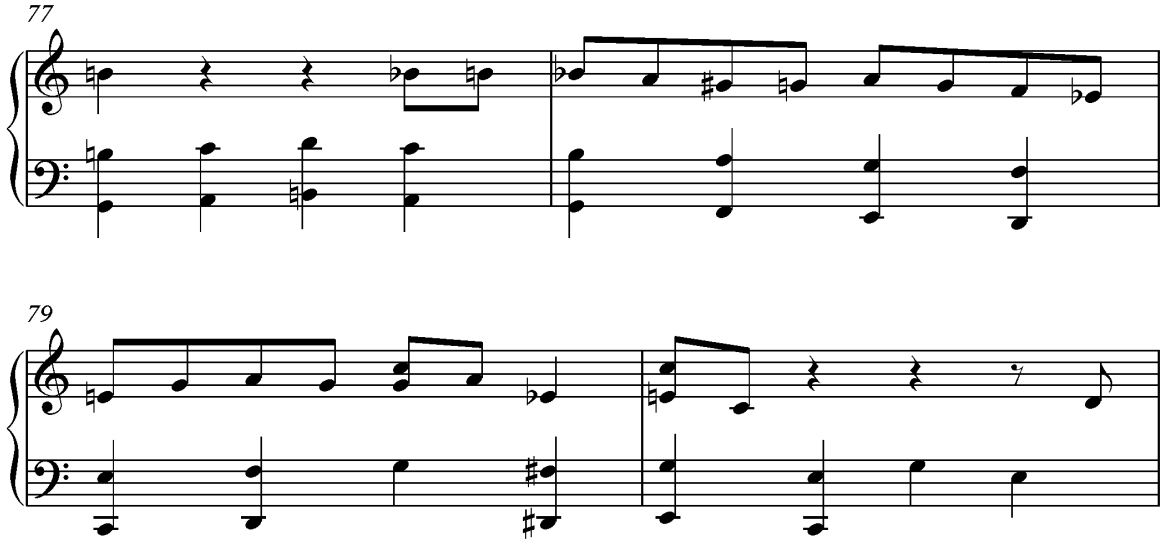
Diatonic tenths can be considered the interval of a tenth from any note within the current key centre. For example, tenths ascending through a major scale are presented in figure 15 below:

*Figure 16*



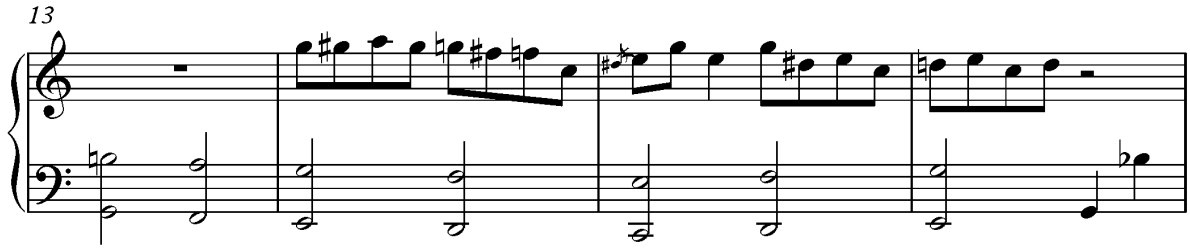
Pearce employs this device regularly, as is shown below. Figure 17 presents an obvious example from *That's About It*:

*Figure 17*



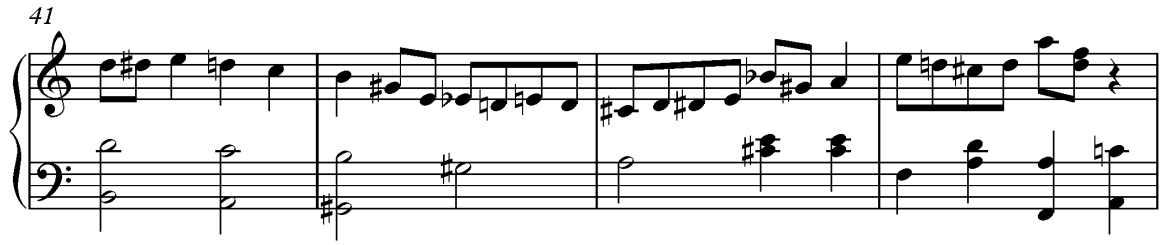

The link to Teddy Wilson is clear in Pearce's composition *Wilson's Idea*, wherein he deploys diatonic tenths regularly, including measures 13 to 16:

*Figure 18*



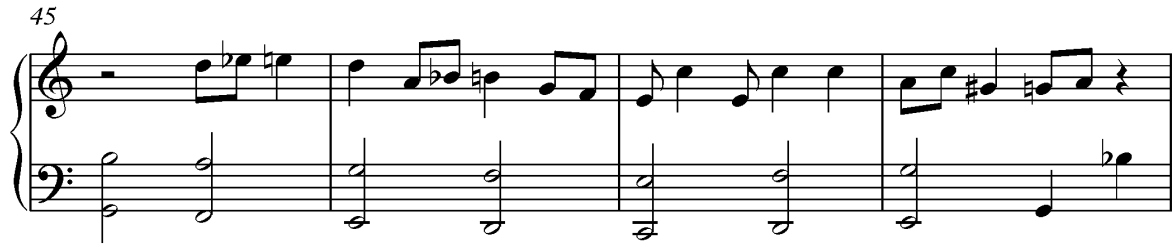

in measures 41 to 42:

*Figure 19*



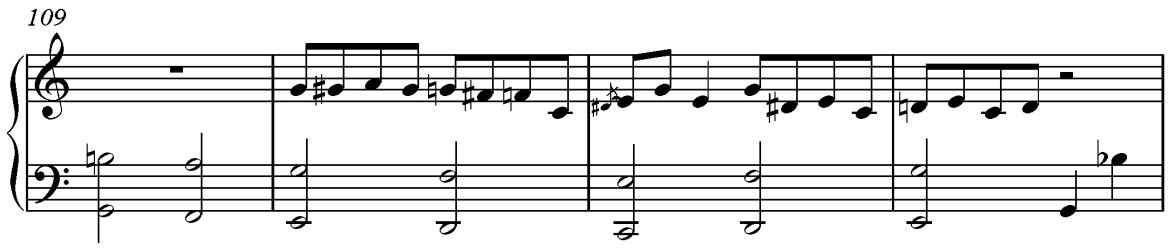

again in measure 45 to 48:

*Figure 20*




and again in measures 109 to 112:

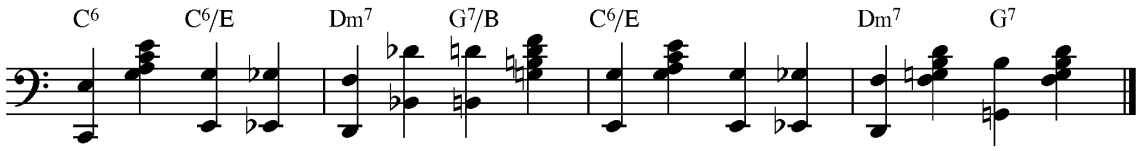
*Figure 21*




b) Chromatic tenths

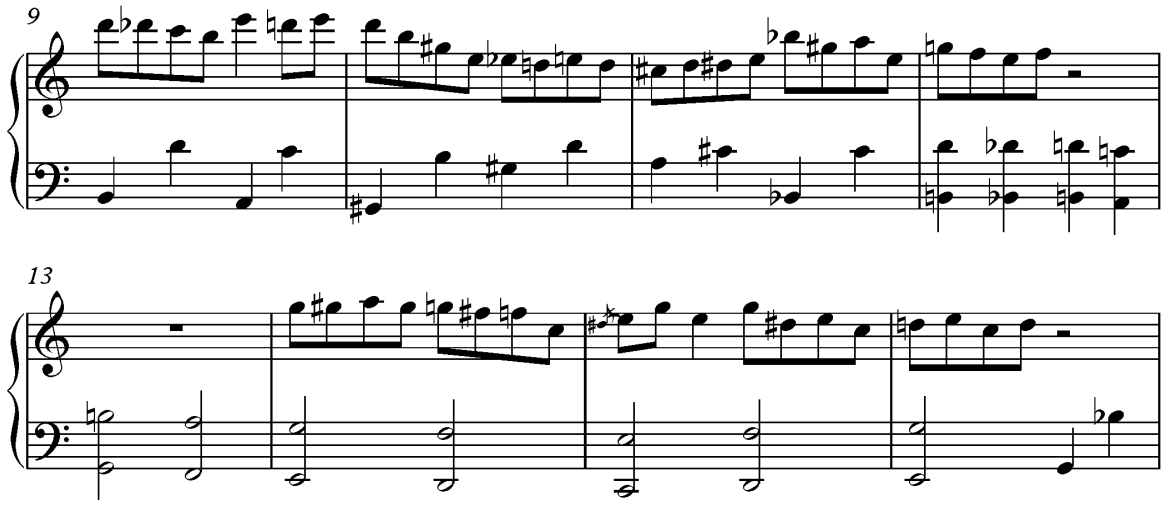
Chromatic tenths can be defined as any interval of a tenth outside that of the current key; and they are most often used as chromatic passing tones connecting diatonic tenths. For example, chromatic tenths can be used to connect an inversion of the current chord to the next chord, as per figure 22 below:

*Figure 22*



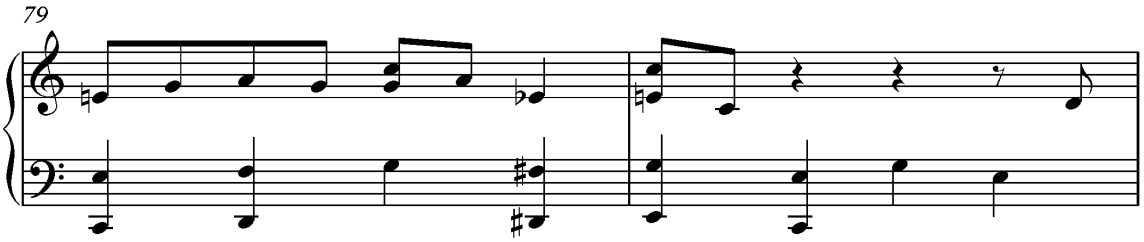

Pearce employs chromatic tenths in a similar manner as outlined above, that is as connecting movements between diatonic tenths. For example, in *Wilson's Idea* in measure 12 (8 measures rendered here for context):

*Figure 23*



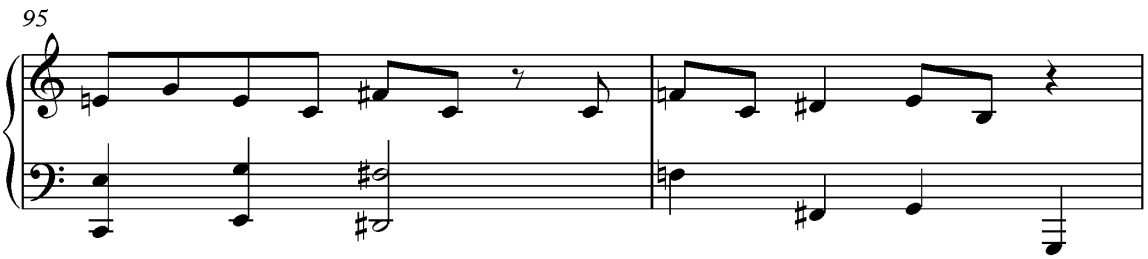

Examples can also be found in *That's About It* as evidenced below in measures 79 to 80 in figure 24:

*Figure 24*



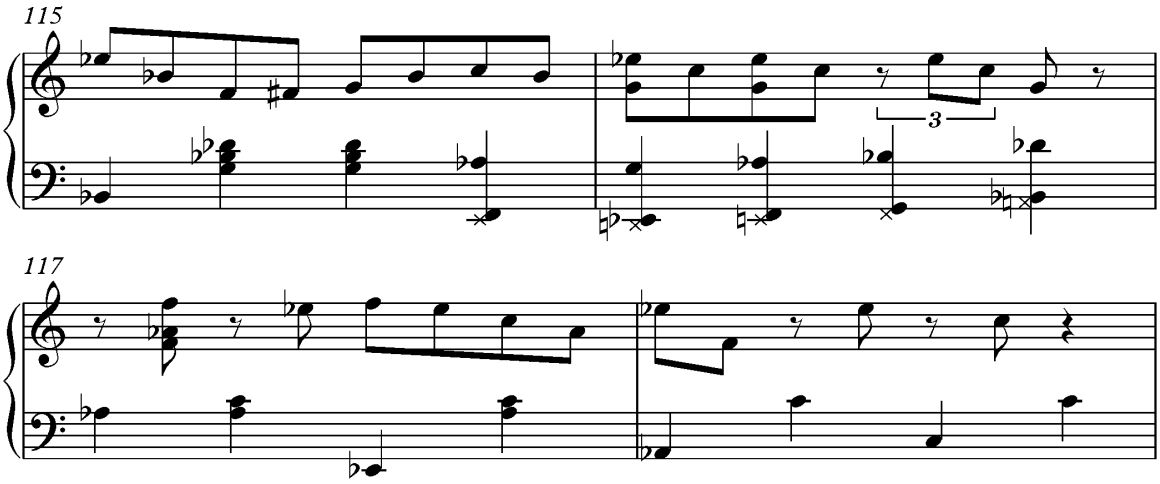

again in measures 95 to 96:

*Figure 25*



and again in measures 115 to 117:

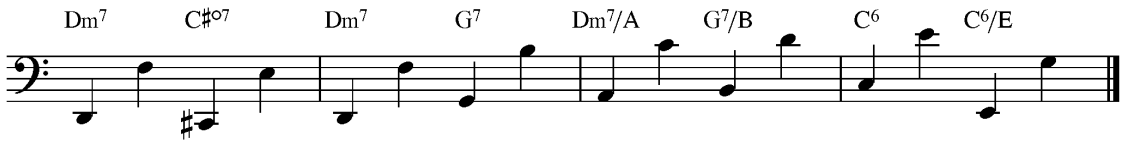
*Figure 26*




c) Broken tenths

Broken tenths can be defined as either diatonic or chromatic tenths employed as melodic rather than harmonic intervals. That is to say, the two notes that make up the tenth are not played simultaneously, but consecutively. See figure 27 below:

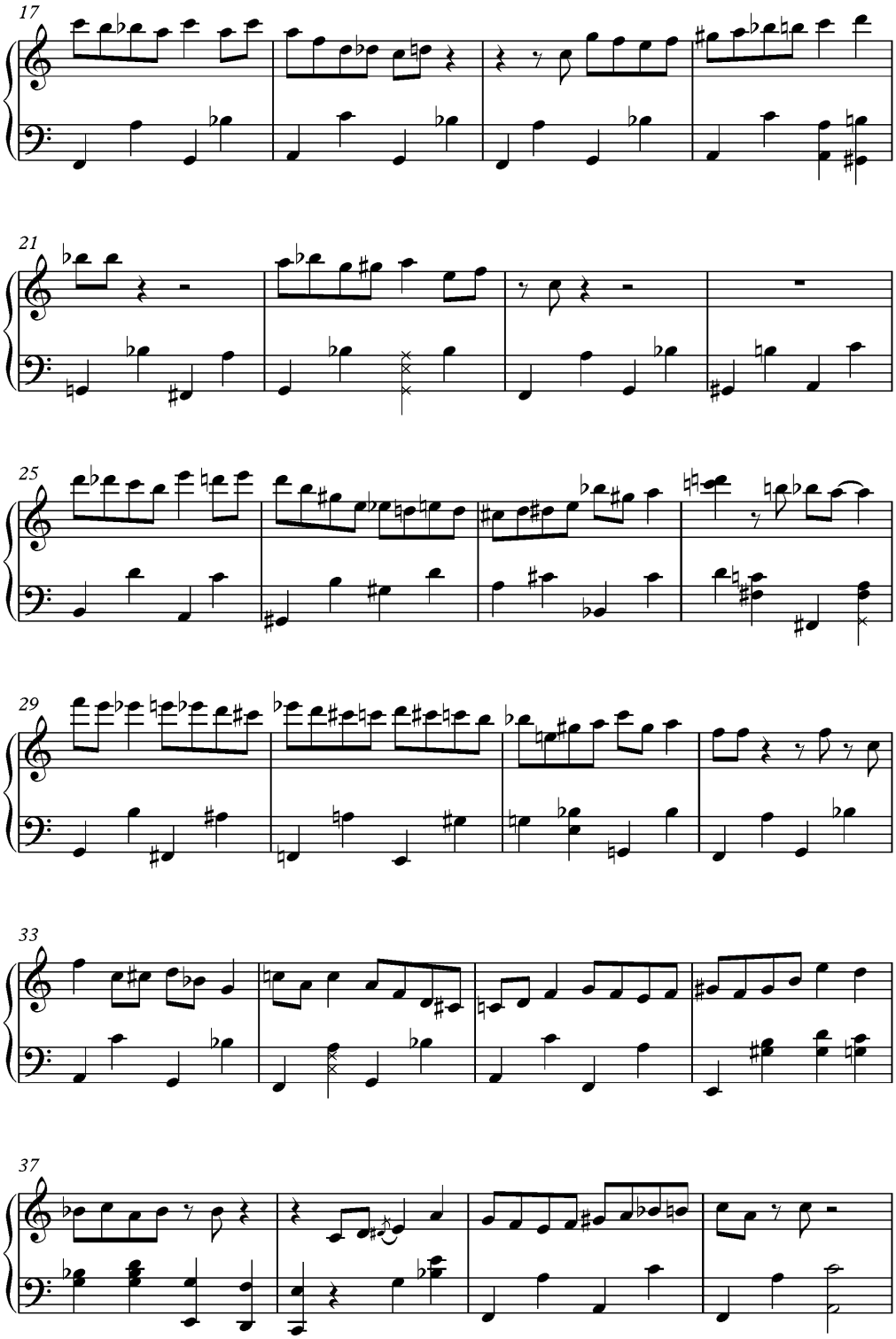
*Figure 27*




Broken tenths take a central place within Pearce's mature left hand style. Coupled with broken thirds, and variations of stride piano that see the left hand not jumping as far as would be considered normal by the tradition, we begin to see an encapsulation of Pearce's

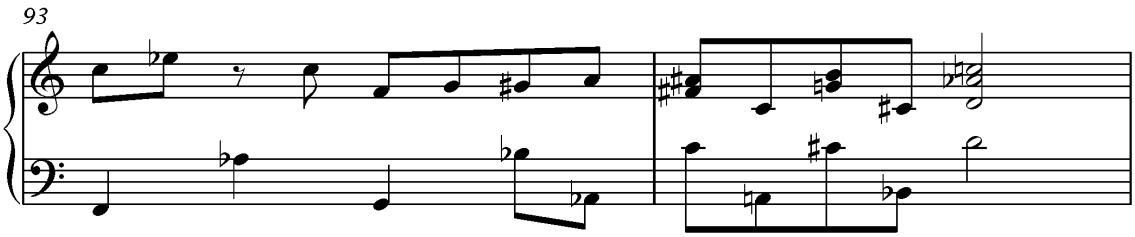
uniquely economical left hand voice. This use of broken tenths is evidenced throughout many tracks. Firstly, and most overtly, in *Wilson's Idea*, as shown in figure 28 below:

*Figure 28*



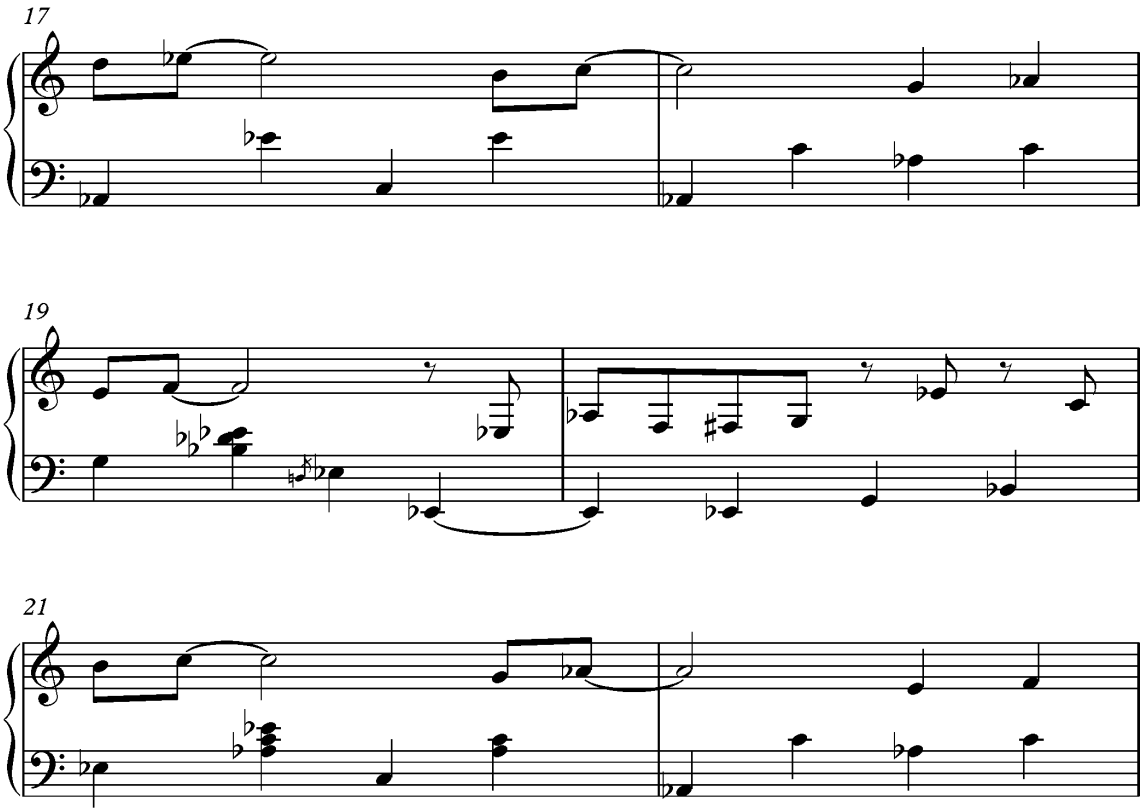
This pattern of broken tenths continues throughout almost the entirety of this track. It is possible to hear the broken tenths in play in *Thinking About Bix*, measures 93 to 94:

*Figure 29*




They also appear again in *That's About It* in measures 17 to 22:

*Figure 30*



**Chord Types and Voicings**

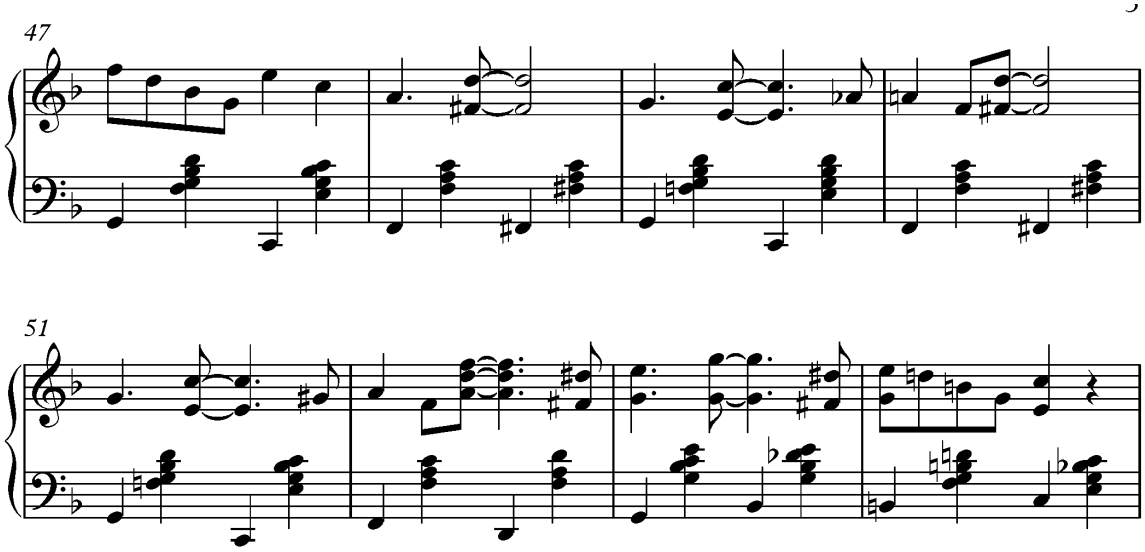
The majority of Pearce's left hand voicings displayed in his mature style are either three or four note voicings, and are usually diatonic triads, sixth, or seventh chords. Rarely does Pearce extend his chordal work – occasionally he will play a dominant ninth, but for the most part the left hand chord work is non-extended and diatonic, leaving the right hand to colour the harmony further. In some arrangements of melodic and thematic material, Pearce employs richer chords (including 6/9 chords, dominant thirteenths, and occasionally some chromatic extensions on dominant chords), but these appear as part of the composition and arrangement framework as opposed to being integrated into his improvisational language. I posit that Pearce's employment of extended chromatic harmony arises largely from extemporisation of a melodic fragment as part of an arrangement rather than an integral part of his harmonic and melodic vocabulary due to his rejection of what he terms the avant garde, which could be construed as jazz from the bebop era onwards.[125]

Some works contain no chords at all for many measures, with Pearce instead utilising broken tenths or a walking-style bass line. *Wilson's Idea* is one such example.[126] Pearce's sparse left hand voicings are in part what gives rise to his individual sound. Pearce's left hand voicings, when they do appear, are in closed position, and centred squarely in the mid-range of the piano. This can be seen clearly by examining the transcriptions in Appendix 1, however some examples will be outlined below.

[125] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 273.
[126] For the full transcription, please see Appendix 1.

A clear example of Pearce's left hand voicings can be seen below in measures 47 to 54 of *The Caper of Commerce*:

*Figure 31*




In figure 32 below, it is possible to see Pearce using rootless voicings, and one example of a dominant 9th chord. This figure show measures 113 to 116 from *Thinking About Bix*:

*Figure 32*

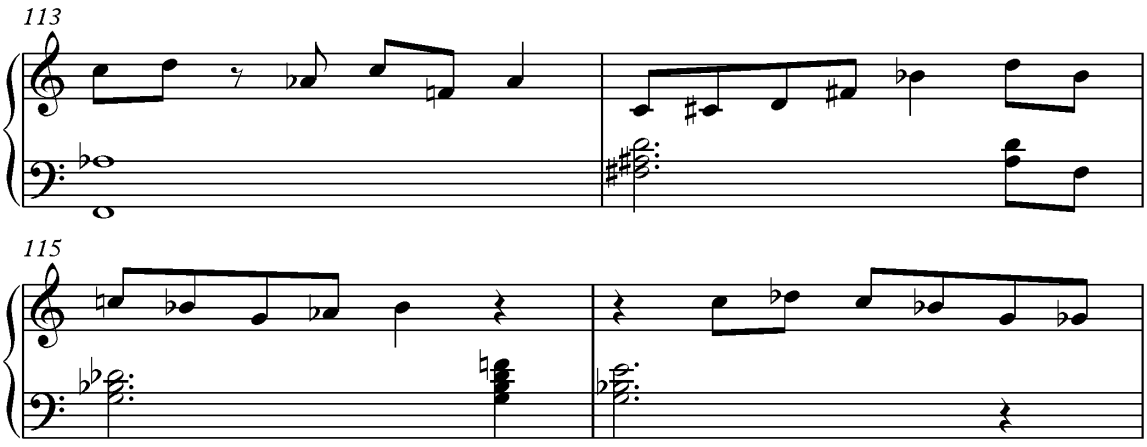
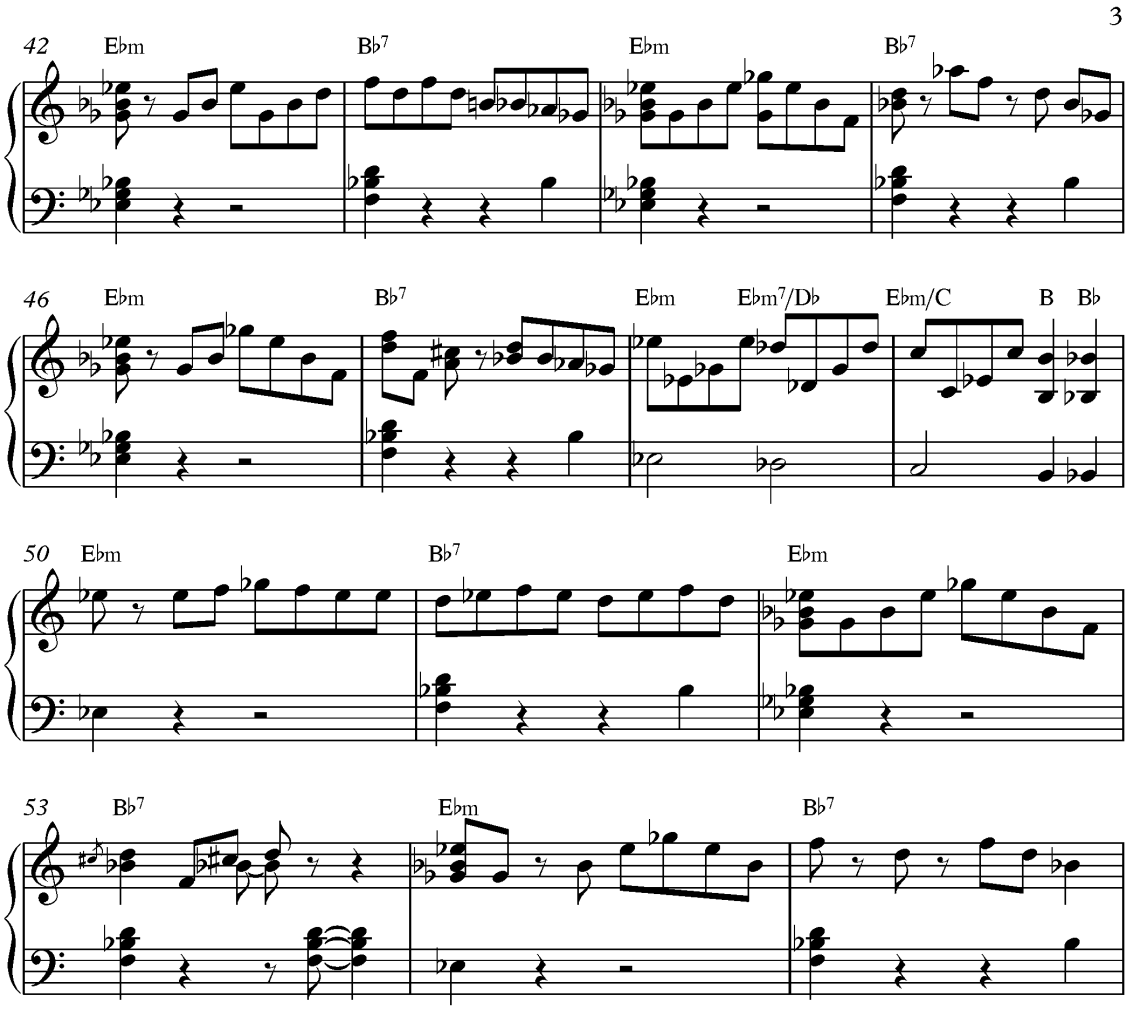


Figure 33 below show the stop-time chorus from *Whatnot* (measures 42 to 55). Pearce's left hand voicings here are diatonic triads – not even a seventh is included. Any and all chromaticism and spelling of seventh chords is relegated to the improvisatory passages of the right hand.

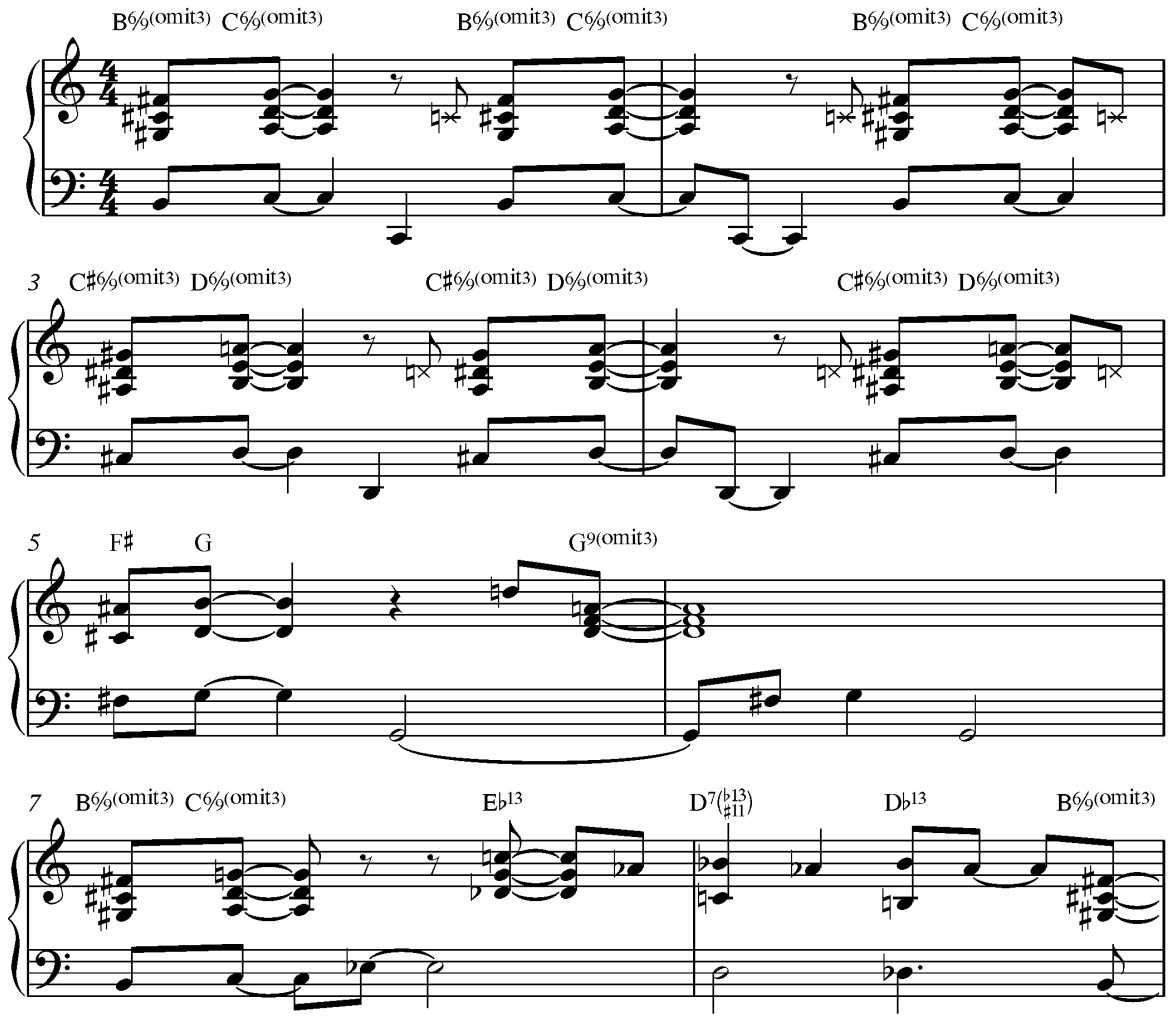
*Figure 33*




As mentioned above, Pearce used chords outside of diatonic triads, sixth chords and seventh chords as part of his mature output, however these chords and their voicings are largely part of composed material, and the pianistic arrangements thereof. For example, in

figure 34 below, Pearce is using many chords with extensions that do not appear in his improvisatory work in the left hand. The chromatic extensions are largely the melodic material, underpinned by chromatic bass movement (measure 7 and 8 show this clearly). It is a feature of Pearce's mature output that, in addition to a firm grasp of traditional jazz piano styles, more complex harmonic material is present. It is notable that this harmonic complexity is present in the arrangement of the thematic material only – the rest of the performance is largely centred around a dialogue of two single note lines between the two hands. Please refer to the full transcription in Appendix 1.

*Figure 34*



**Rhythmic variation**

a) Length of notes

An important facet of Pearce's mature style is his note length, and lack of use of the sustain pedal on the piano. Given that a lack of use of the sustain pedal allows for clearer articulation and more attack during phrases, it is interesting to note Mehegan's attitude towards Fats Waller's use of the sustain pedal:

> "The first recorded example of the use of the tenth was in 1921 by James P. Johnson in 'Keep Off The Grass'. Johnson was the teacher of 'Fats' Waller who extended the swing-bass system by introducing the sustaining pedal as an important adjunct of the tenth-chord structure. By pedalling the swing-bass, Waller was able to create a thunderous beat which exuded all the vitality and joy so much a part of this giant pianist."[127]

This rather purple prose seems to be more about the author's admiration for Waller, rather than an assessment of the suitability of the sustain pedal for the given musical situation. It is my experience, in talking to a vast number of professional jazz pianists the world over during the last fifteen years, that the sustain pedal is to be eschewed in favour of developing sound technique, and the ability to perform legato without the assistance of the release of the dampers. At slower tempos (certainly in ballads) the sustain pedal is

[127] Mehegan, *Jazz Improvisation,* 13.

sometimes used, but still it is infrequent, and only to aid in legato playing. Pearce's mature output shows a vary sparing use of the sustain pedal – it is only heard occasionally at slower tempos or in rubato sections. Singer Christine Lincoln comments on Pearce's 'dry' sound:

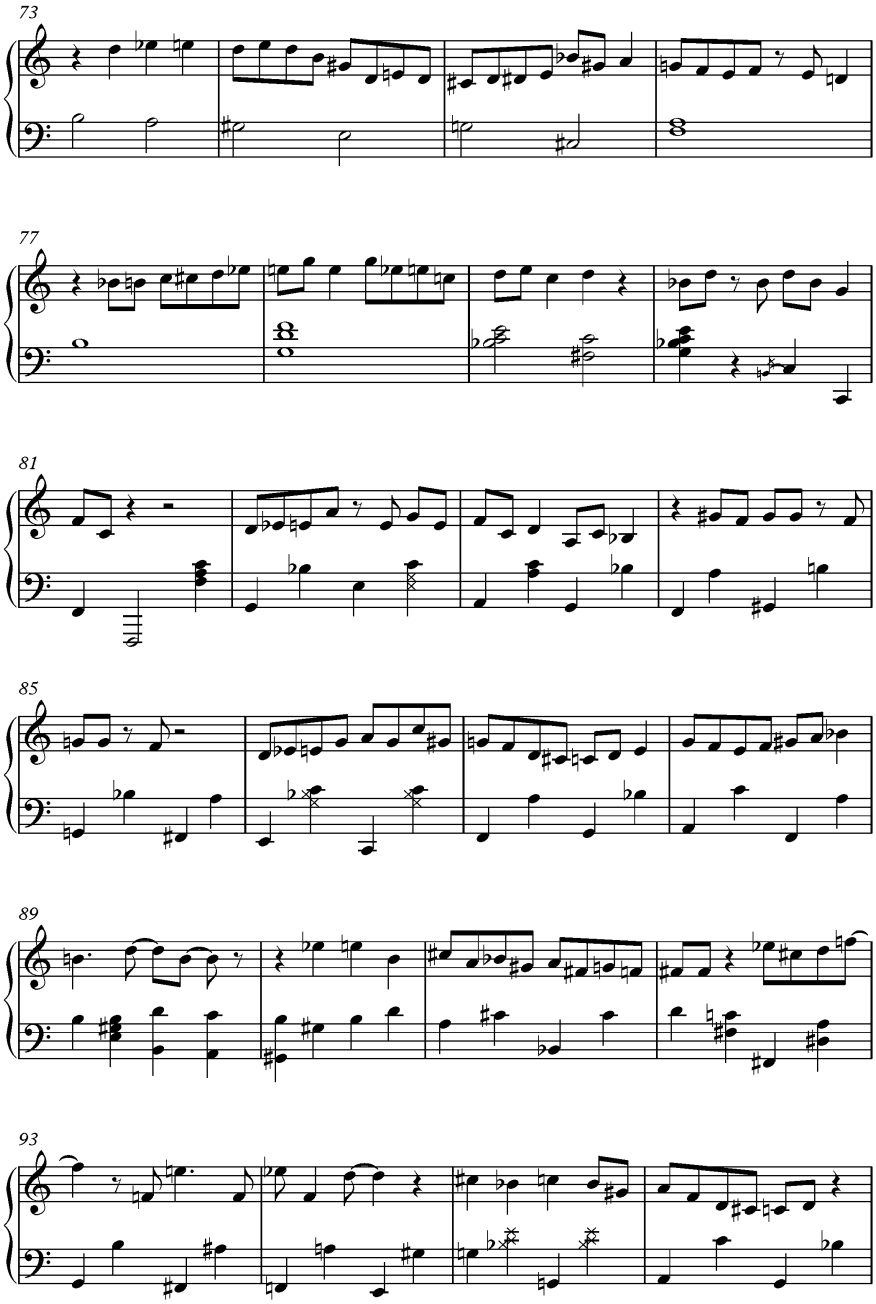
> I'd been in pop bands where electric instruments are used and there is a lot of sustain, but Ian didn't use sustain, he kept his foot right off that pedal, so the usual aural cues were not there. I found that really unnerving, because it would be as though the bass would fall away and I'd think 'Oh where's my anchor? Where is it?'. I'd been listening, when I was younger, to people like Nina Simone who used sustain a lot because they'd sort of just play one note and that would ring through and she's singing over the top of it. Whereas Ian went 'donk' and there'd be all this silence, and I'd think, 'Who's going to play?'. But I very quickly got used to filling those gaps. I realised that was how he played.[128]

Throughout the transcriptions contained in Appendix 1, Pearce's left hand parts are rendered generally as quarter notes instead of varying lengths of sixteenth and eighth notes with rests in order to keep the transcriptions uncluttered. The reader should assume that the regular pulsing quarter notes are, in reality, shorter than the length of an entire quarter note. It is impractical to render every note to its exact length, and would be a pointless exercise – notions of genre, style, and performance practice are far more important, as they are with traditional Western art music. Traditional notation reveals its shortcomings when attempting to use this system to notate jazz.

[128] Lincoln interviewed in Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 279-280.

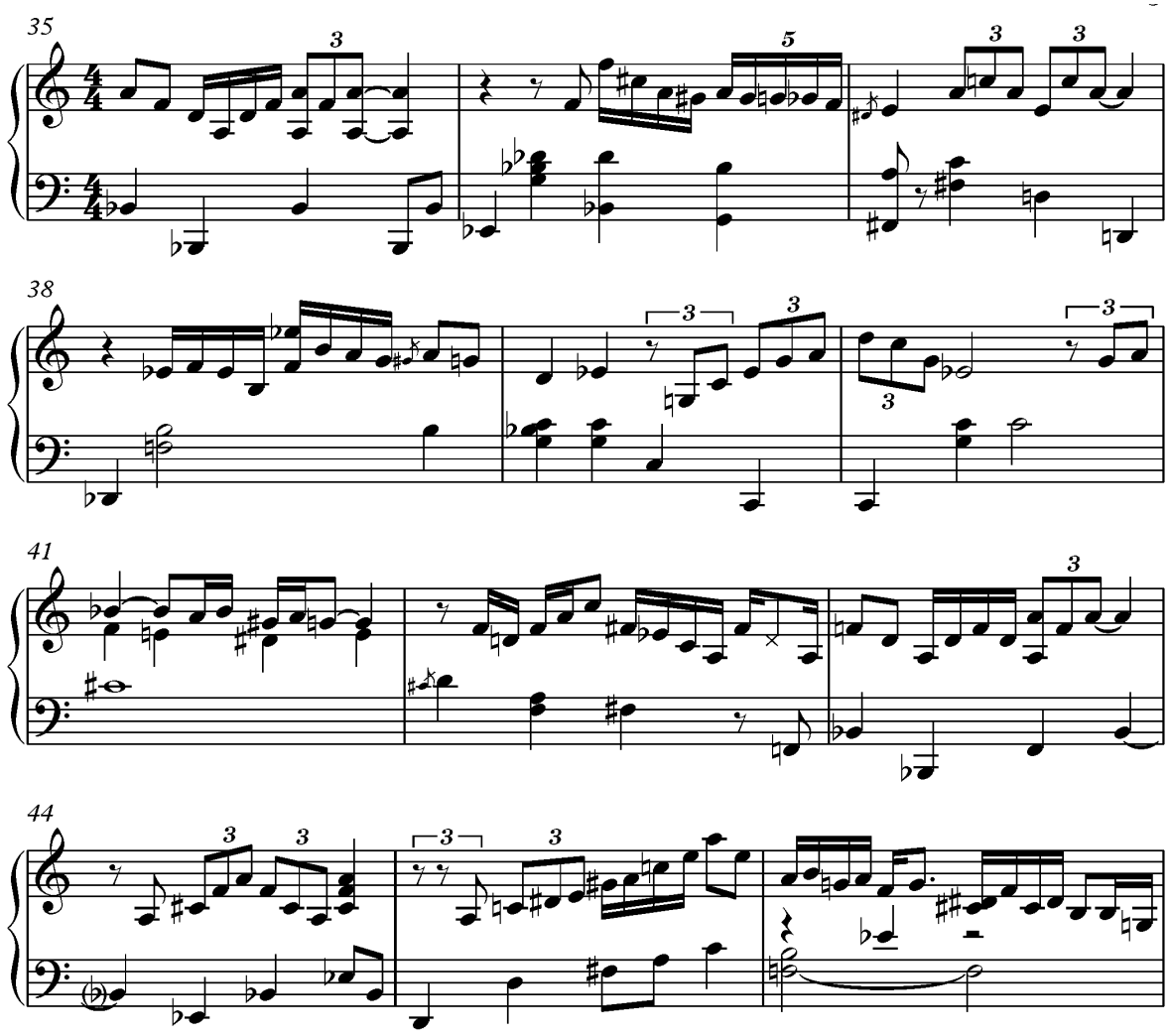
Pearce's mature output shows the left hand almost entirely devoid of sustain pedal usage. When sustain is required, it is provided by holding the notes rather than using the pedal. Coupled with the use of stride piano techniques, Pearce's variation of note lengths provides a great variety of attack and momentum in his performances. Below in figure 35, it is possible to see a wide variety of note lengths from 'less than a quarter' through to whole notes. The figure below is from measures 73 to 96 of *Wilson's Idea*:

*Figure 35*



It is important to examine differing tempos when considering the importance of note length. The example from *Wilson's Idea* above is at a medium-up pace, whereas below is an example from *Warm Afternoon* (measures 35 to 46) which is at a ballad tempo. Again, a wide variety of note lengths is evident.

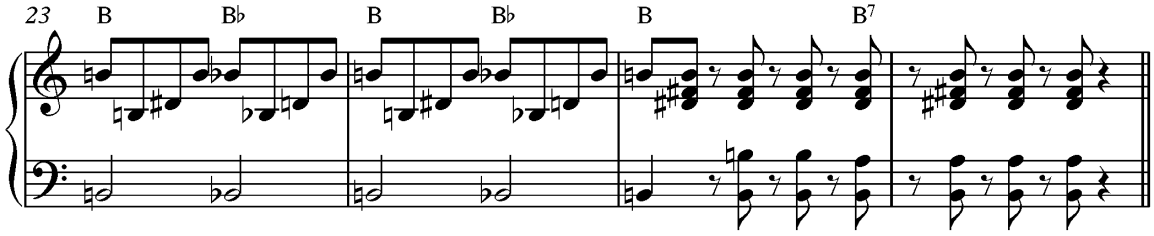
*Figure 36*



b) Syncopation

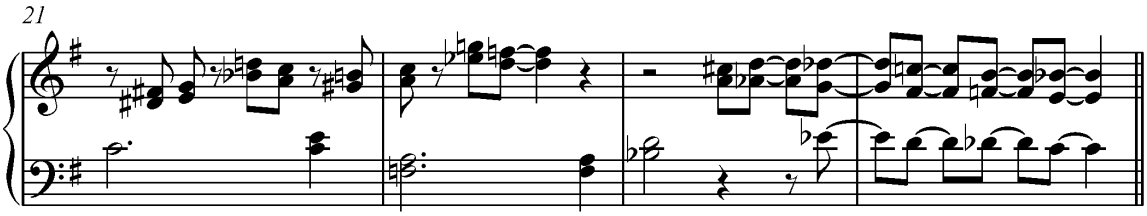
Pearce's mature output confines syncopation largely to either elements of composed thematic material that has been arranged between the hands, such as in figure 37 below, which shows the final four measures of the opening strain to *Whatnot*:

*Figure 37*



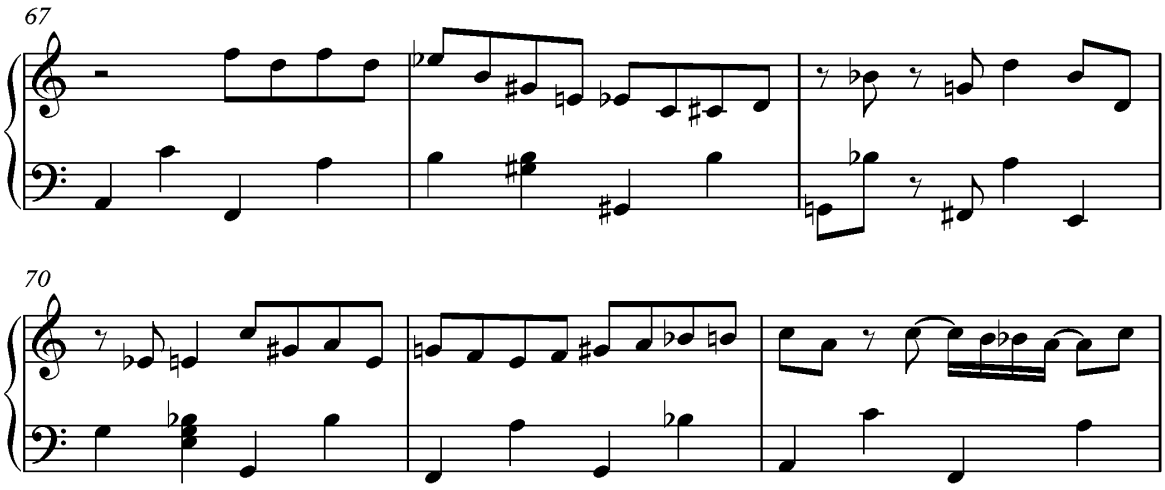

Another example can be found in the 'B' section of *A Little Something* (measures 21 to 24):

*Figure 38*




On occasion, syncopation is found during the course of the improvisatory sections of Pearce's mature output, but this is much rarer than the syncopations that occur as part of pre-arranged material. Once such moment occurs during *Wilson's Idea*, wherein both hands begin an off-beat phrase which the right hand follows through whilst the left hand returns to on-beat phrasing (measures 69 to 70 in figure 39 below):

*Figure 39*




## 3.2 Right hand

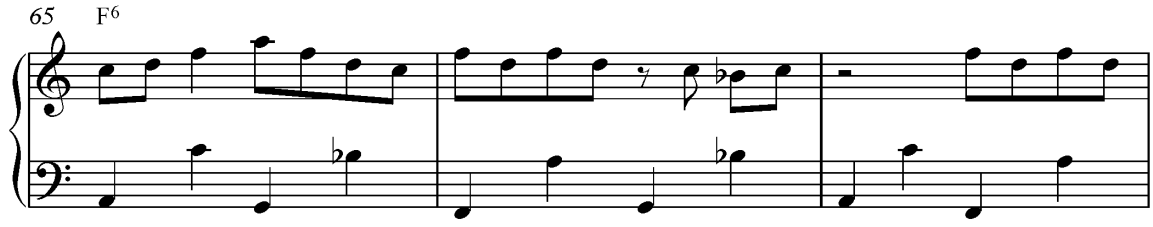
### Melodic Devices

It is pertinent to the current study that Pearce became fully formed as a jazz pianist in an era well before formal jazz education was established. This has led to Pearce obtaining a high degree of authenticity through having no other choice than to deal with the recorded source material, and eventually a circle of like-minded peers and colleagues. In contrast, my awareness of jazz was prompted through the Australian public education system, and was continued (after a fashion) in a formal university course beginning in 1999. Then, as now, this system of jazz education offers an often problematic introduction to the music, beginning (as was the case of my induction) with the era immediately post-bebop, introducing students to the music of Miles Davis's first quintet, and the sextet that recorded the album *Kind of Blue*. Whilst this is of course relevant to any education in jazz, it leads to

the very easily teachable and assessable mode of delivery that is titled 'chord/scale relationships'. This manner of approach to improvisation has its drawbacks. For now, it is important to consider circumstance yet again in the analysis of Pearce's mature output, as his geographical situation and lack of access to materials and processes necessarily contributed to his musical development, and development of an artistic aesthetic.

Pearce's mature output features melodic devices that are can be loosely grouped into two sub-categories: diatonic and chromatic. Pearce's use of diatonicism can take on the form of arpeggiation of chord tones, as seen below in figure 40 which shows measures 65 to 67 of *Wilson's Idea*:

*Figure 40*

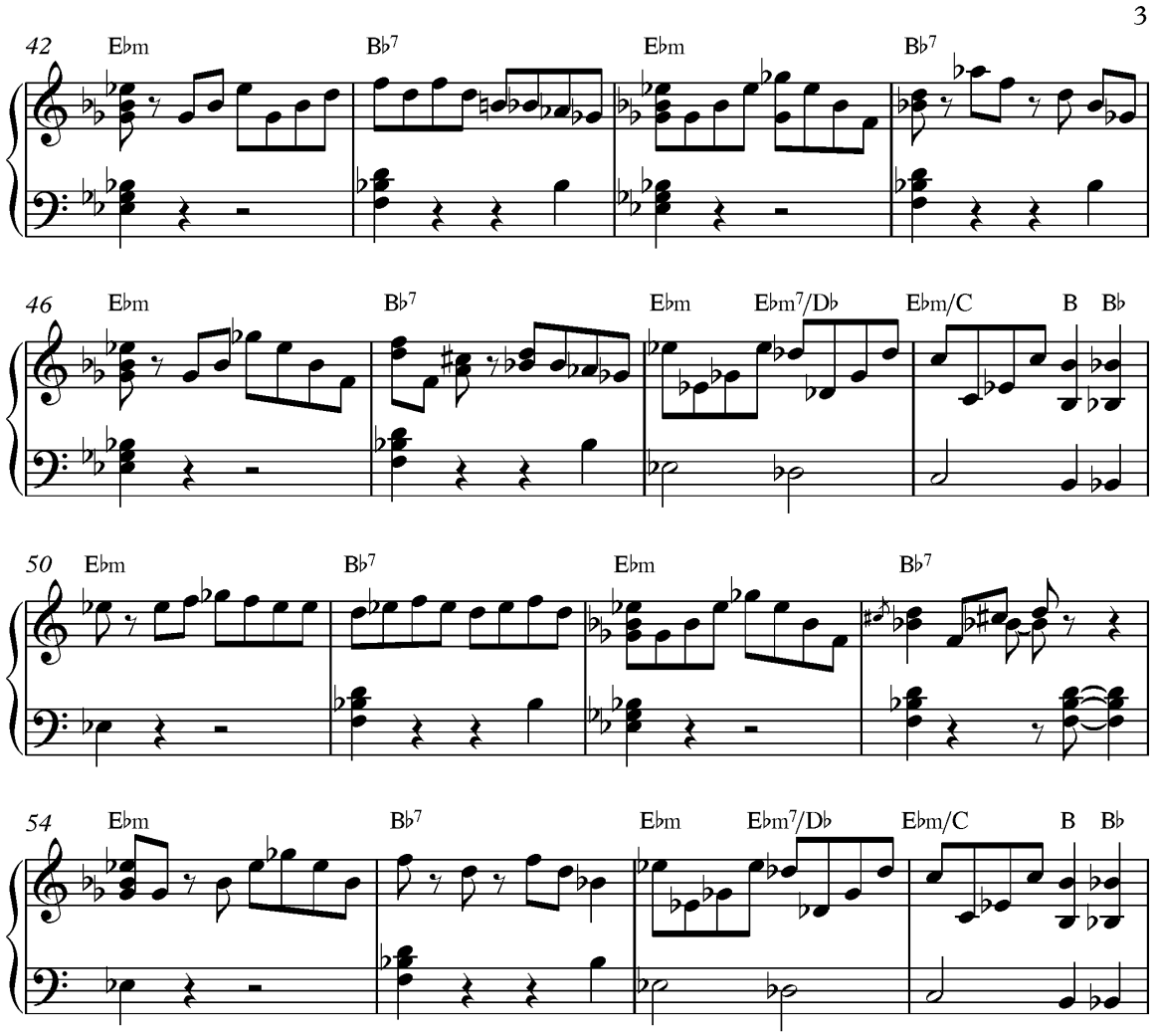



Here Pearce is arpeggiating the F6 chord in his right hand, while the left hand moves alternatively through the implied harmony of F6 and Gm7/C7, providing a contrasting underpinning to the clear outline of the dominant harmony, which is a static F6. This juxtaposition of strong melodic structure in the right hand, with alternating harmonic

motion in the left hand is a feature of Pearce's mature output, and will be discussed more thoroughly in the following section.

A further example of Pearce's diatonic melodic devices can be found in *Whatnot* during the stop chorus, shown below in figure 41:

*Figure 41*

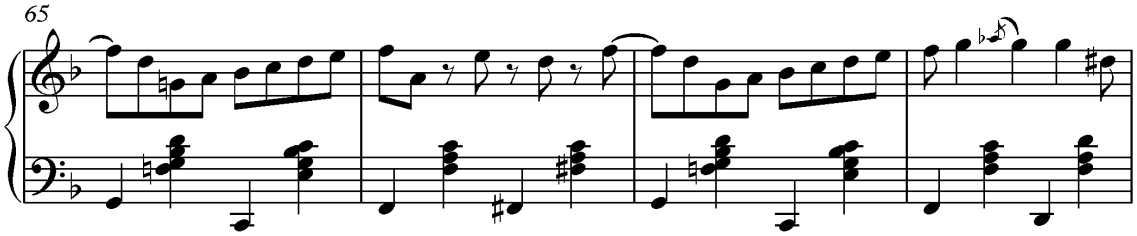



In the figure above, Pearce's use of diatonicism and arpeggiation is clear. Almost every tonic minor chord is arpeggiated in a triadic fashion, with the exception of measure 50,

which introduces a simple scalar motive that is repeated at the dominant in the following measure.

Another example of Pearce's use of diatonicism can be seen below in figure 42, showing measures 65 to 68 of *The Caper of Commerce*:

*Figure 42*




Pearce is remaining firmly within the home key of F major here, employing arpeggiated leaps downwards through the harmony, and scalar runs upwards. Whilst arpeggiated figures form a substantial part of Pearce's mature right hand style, scalar runs occur as well. Please refer to the collection of transcriptions in Appendix 1 for further examples of this.

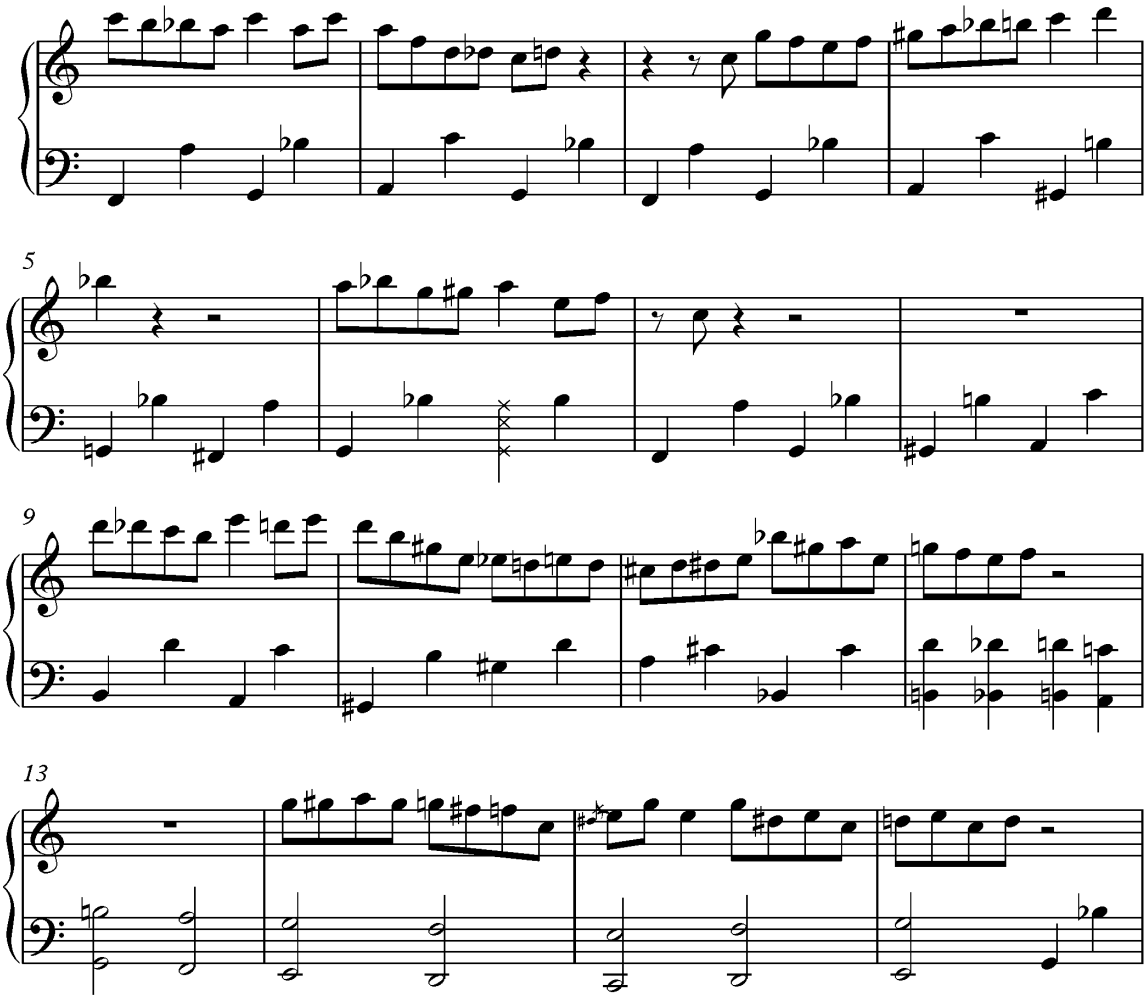
Turning now to the notion of chromaticism, it is important to note the way Pearce employs chromaticism as a melodic device, and how it is used in context. As has been noted above, Pearce was uninterested in 'modern' jazz.[129] Whilst at times resembling some of the ornamentation and overt chromaticism of the bebop era, Pearce's chromaticism is firmly rooted in the melodic language of pre-WWII jazz. Largely, Pearce's usage of chromaticism is as a linking melodic device, moving from one chord tone to the next, or encircling or

[129] For the purposes of this argument, 'modern' jazz here refer to bebop and subsequent genres of jazz.

otherwise decorating a chord tone. These chromatic linking devices form part of Pearce's overall melodic conception, and act as a foil for the diatonic motifs, creating a sense of tension and release throughout his melodic phrases, and providing forward motion throughout his melodic lines.

A clear example of this concept can be seen in the opening 16 measures of *Wilson's Idea* below in figure 43:

*Figure 43*



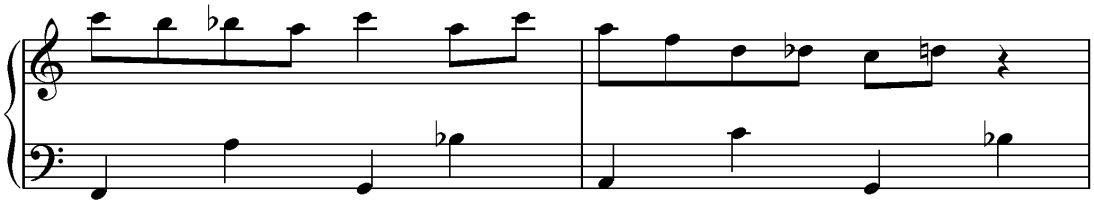
It is important to note Pearce's own words regarding this particular composition in the liner notes to *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III*:

> This is my homage to the person who, when all's said and done, would probably be my favourite jazz pianist – Teddy, of course – the most Mozartian of jazz musicians. The opening two bars (the basis of the piece) are taken from his intro to a Benny Goodman Trio recording – aficionados will know which one.[130]

As far as can be determined, it appears Pearce is referring to the track *Someday, Sweetheart* performed by Goodman, Wilson, and Krupa.[131]

Taking as read Pearce's intention for the piece (in both the composed and the improvisatory sections), his chromatic conception can be observed in action here. The first two measures of the melody (rendered below in figure 44) present the notion of chromatic linkage.

*Figure 44*



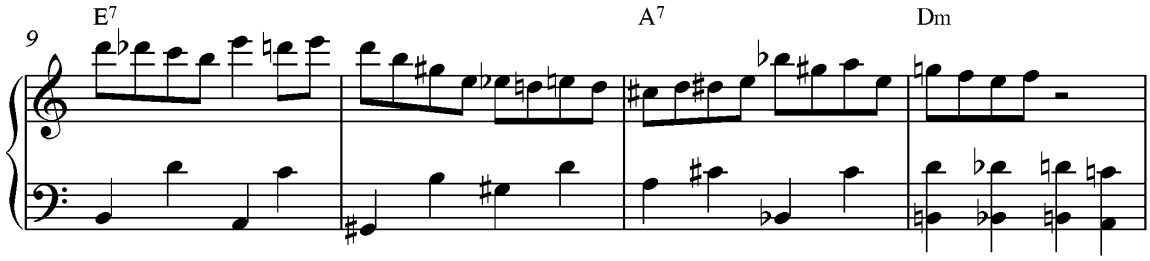
The first descending chromatic passage on beats 1 and 2 show a linking passage between the 5th and the 3rd of the harmony, before leaping back up to the 5th. In measure 2, another chromatic linking device is employed in order to join the 6th and the 5th of the harmony. In

[130] Liner notes, *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III: Ian Pearce*.
[131] His Master's Voice, B.8402, 1936.

this example, all chromatic passing tones are off the beat, allowing the chord tones to appear on strong beats, thus strengthening the sense of line. Following the codification of jazz for educational purposes during the latter half of the twentieth century, the concept of bebop scales[132] was presented – Pearce often employs similar chromatic linking devices. Whilst Pearce's mature output is clearly not bebop-oriented, his improvisatory and compositional language point towards similar use of chromaticism as a melodic linking device. Again, more will be made of this below in the self-reflective section of this exegesis.

Returning to *Wilson's Idea*, and examination of measures 9 to 12 reveals further information regarding Pearce's use of chromaticism. Refer to figure 45 below:

*Figure 45*




Measure 9 shows Pearce descending chromatically between chord tones again, echoing the first measure of the work. He then arpeggiates the harmony, before landing a chromatic passing tone on beat 3 of measure 2, creating tension that is immediately resolved through a descending scalar line that arrives on the 3rd of the following chord, A7. In measure 3, Pearce reverses the chromatic linking devices he employed in measures 1 and 9, ascending chromatically from the 3rd to the 5th of the harmony. Next, he leaps to the b9 of the

[132] For example, the 'major bebop scale' is a normal major scale with a raised fifth inserted, in order to allow the 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 6th of a tonic chord to fall on the strong beats in a bar.

harmony and uses this as the beginning of an encirclement of the root, establishing and resolving tension. This line continues to employ ornamentation, but diatonic as opposed to chromatic ornamentation - in this case using upper and lower neighbour tones of the 3rd of the D minor chord. Pearce uses anticipation as a structural device here – the left hand in measure 12 is already playing G7, and moving down through chromatic and diatonic tenths to arrive at the root and 3rd of G7 in measure 13. This example shows a sophisticated grasp of melodic and harmonic structures, and their use in creating interest within a work. More attention will be given to the interplay of the hands below.

**Harmonic Devices**

Turning now to Pearce's use of harmony throughout his mature output, *Warm Afternoon* provides clear examples. *Warm Afternoon* is a slower work, which contains section of rubato performance as well as strict time. It is inspired by a painting, as Pearce states in the liner notes:

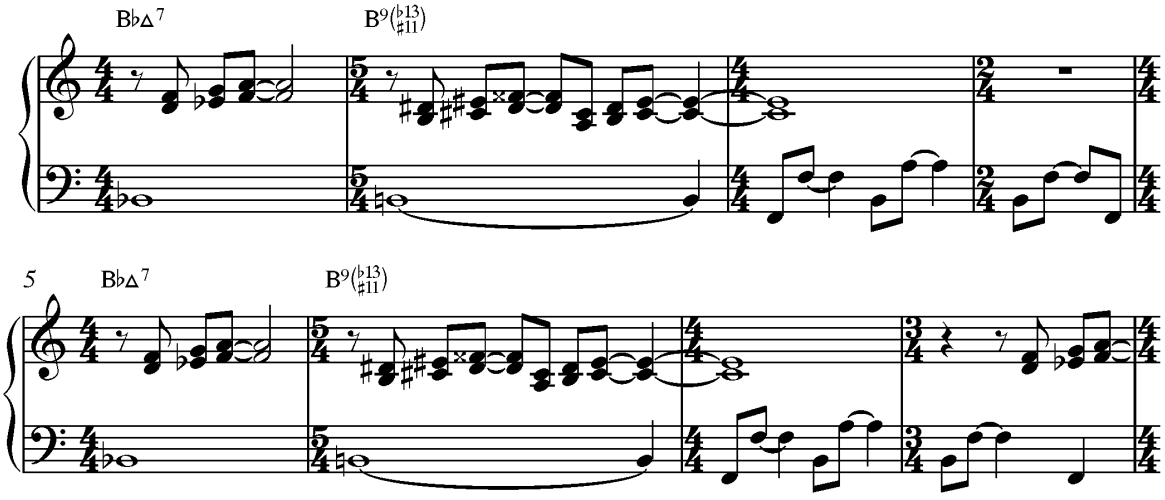
> One of British painter John Henson's (see the note about the cover drawing) beautiful Tasmanian landscapes has this title. I tried to get the mood suggested by the title rather than interpret the painting itself.[133]

The work presents more complex harmony that is evident in Pearce's other work. Whilst a vast majority of Pearce's other compositions fall within the 'traditional jazz' genre, *Warm*

[133] Liner notes to *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III – Ian Pearce.*

*Afternoon* displays more of Pearce's explorations of extended harmony and chromaticism. This is immediately evident in the introductory passage, as shown below in figure 46:

*Figure 46*

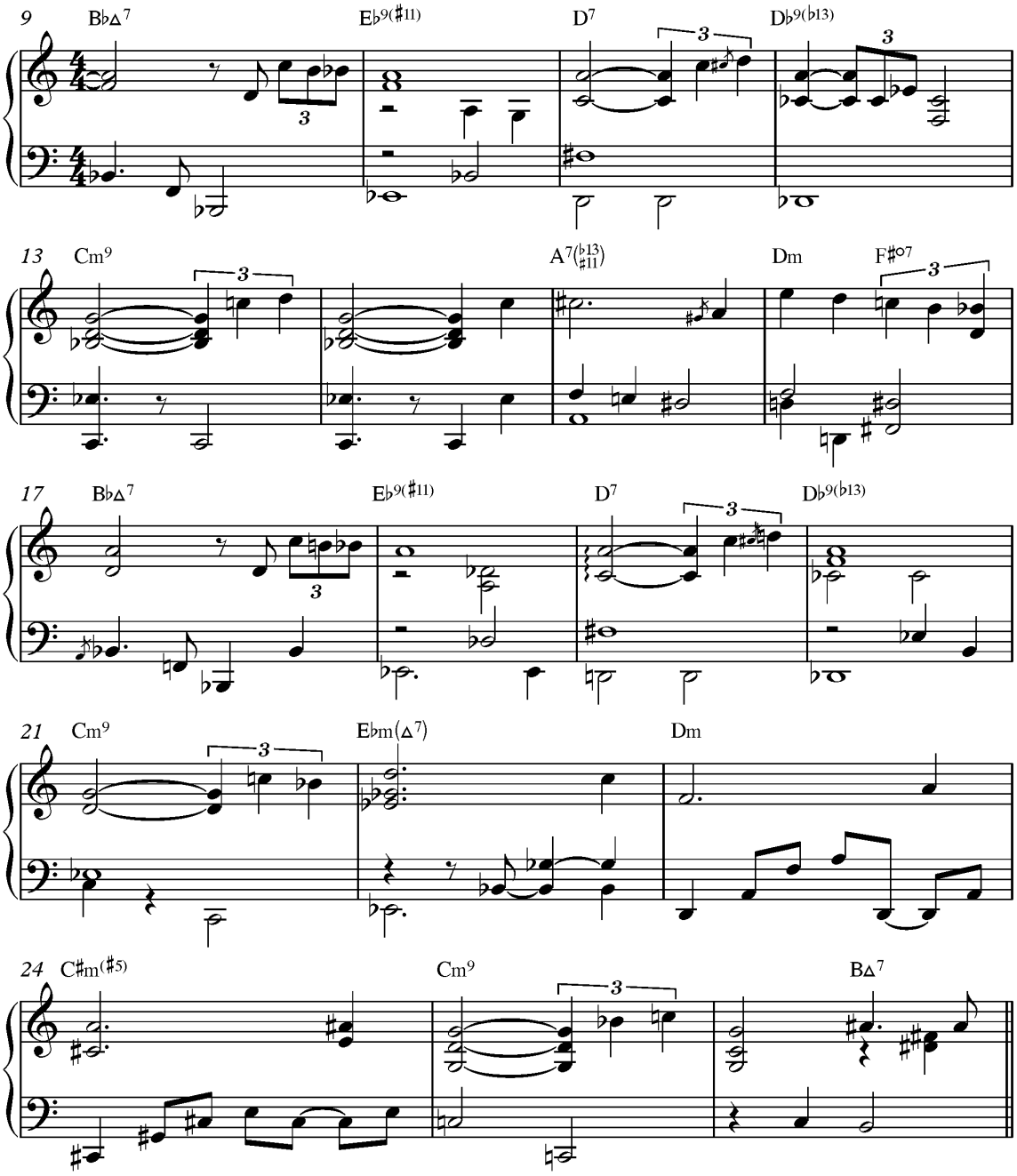



Measure 1 and 5 establish the home key. The remaining measures show Pearce exploring the whole-tone scale, by way of a tri-tone substitution of the V7 chord.[134] This harmonic device allows Pearce to then sequence the melodic motive and re-contextualise it. The tri-tone substitution is signalled loud and clear in measure 3-4 and measures 7-8 in the left hand part.

Moving on to the main theme of the work (shown below in figure 47), further evidence of Pearce's exploration of more chromatic harmony is evident in the relationship of the melodic structures to the harmonic underpinning:

[134] Tri-tone substation is the common jazz practice of exchanging a dominant chord for the other dominant chord that shares the same 3rd and 7th. Their corresponding root notes are a tri-tone apart, hence the term. For example, an F7 can be substituted for a B7 as both dominant chords contain the same notes (inverted) as their 3rd and 7th: Eb (D#) and A.

*Figure 47*




In this example, Pearce pairs a relatively simple, static, and repetitive melodic line with a complex, chromatic harmonic framework. Through measures 9 to 12, the melody is an embellished, repeated A, whilst the harmony moves through the home chord of Bbmaj7,

then to an Eb dominant, a D dominant and a Db dominant, re-contextualising the melody at the major 7th, the #11, the 5th, and the b13th respectively. Measures 13 and 14 have the melody sitting on a G over a Cmin9 chord; a resolution point following the chromaticism of the previous measures. The next two measures (15 and 16) move through a V-I situation to the median, before moving through a diminished chord (an inversion of the vii7, which could also be considered a substitute for the V chord) and returning to the beginning of the cycle. During the following 10 measures this pattern is repeated, but with a variation on the consequent phrase. Instead of resting on the ii chord, Pearce moves to the borrowed chord iv(maj7), before moving chromatically down from the median to return to the home key, still using a simple, static melodic phrase. Setting the melody of the work at 18 bars, bookended by an introductory passage (which in turn becomes a brief interlude) is also a departure from 'standard traditional jazz' procedures regarding formal structure, which is further evidence of Pearce's mature style displaying an individuality.

Another example of Pearce's use of extended, non-diatonic harmony can be found in *Thinking About Bix*. Below are Pearce's notes on this composition in the liner notes:

> To most jazz-loving 'middle-class white boys' of my generation, in Australia and Britain anyway, Leon 'Bix' Beiderbecke was the hero, the idol and the epitome of the legendary tragic genius. In this tribute I've tried to suggest some of the flavour of both his piano writing and his cornet improvisations. This is the piece that Marion likes best, so it's for her.[135]

[135] Liner notes to *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III – Ian Pearce.*

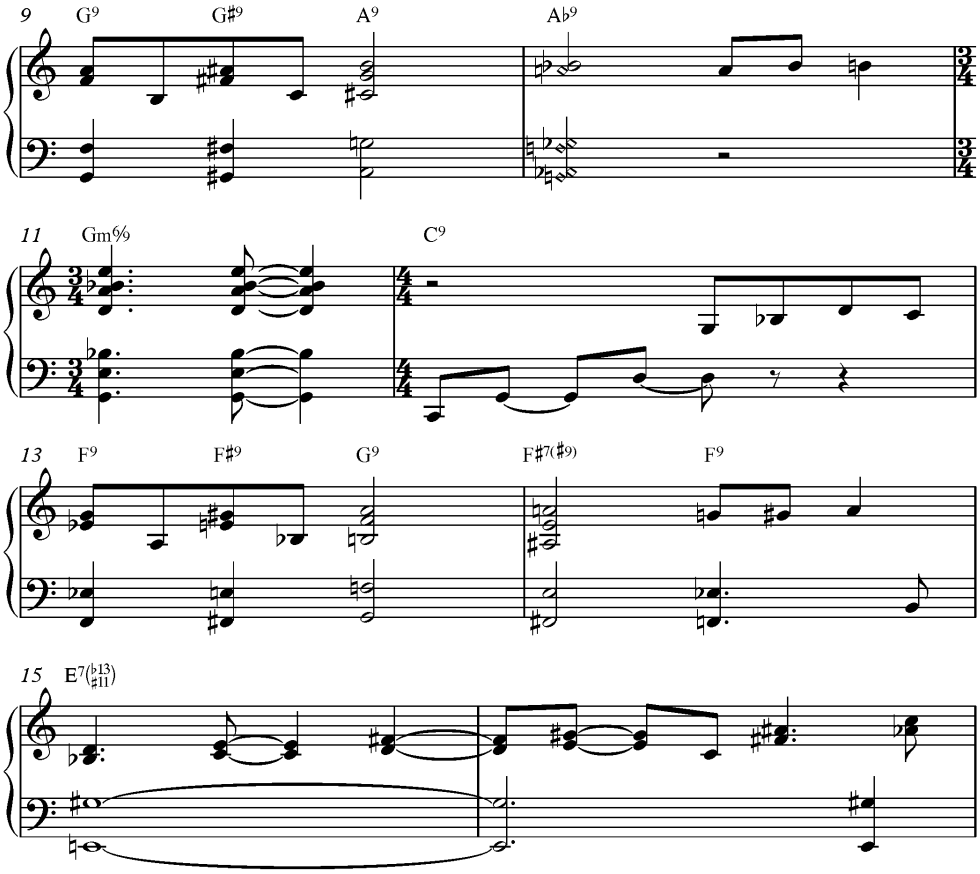
While a thorough investigation of Bix Beiderbecke's melodic devices is outside the scope of this paper, Pearce would have certainly integrated components of both Beiderbecke's cornet and piano stylings into his playing. What is clearly evidenced in *Thinking About Bix* is Pearce's use of chromaticism, his use of dominant parallel harmony, and his use of the whole-tone scale. *Thinking About Bix* closely mirrors some aspects of Beiderbecke's famous piano work *In a Mist*. Gunther Schuller has to the following to say concerning Beiderbecke's harmonic language:

> By 1927 he had probed the new harmonic language enough to set it down (with the help of his arranger friend Bill Challis) in his composition *In a Mist*. As an exercise in constantly modulating, unresolved ninth and whole-tone chords, the piece is a rambling, repetitious, popularised version of the kind of chromatic language Debussy and Scriabin had explored nearly two decades earlier. But these composers would not have been Bix's direct sources, or at least not the only ones. At this time Gershwin's *Piano Preludes* and his famous *Piano Concerto*, often performed in an abbreviated version by the Whiteman orchestra, were well known in New York music circles.[136]

It is possible to see this harmonic vocabulary in *Thinking About Bix*, evidenced below in figure 48 which shows measures 9 to 16:

[136] Gunther Schuller, *Early Jazz* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 191.

*Figure 48*




The use of chromaticism, parallel dominant chords, and extended harmony is clear in the above example. It is not as harmonically daring as *In A Mist*, but it is a clear example of Pearce applying the musical language he assimilated from recordings, and extemporising in his own manner.

Aside from these forays into chromaticism and extended harmony, the bulk of Pearce's work deals with 'traditional jazz' style diatonicism, which is not to say that it is unsophisticated – on the contrary, his employment of this musical language is mature and highly sophisticated – however it points towards Pearce's self-confessed eschewing of 'modern' jazz and avant garde, as mentioned above. This self-imposed delimiting may be

partly the result of Pearce's circumstance – he grew up surrounded by 'hot' jazz, and a peer group interested in the same. Through his travels throughout Australia and overseas, Pearce sought out and performed with traditional jazz musicians. On his return to Hobart, he once again performed with his peers, who were exclusively performing traditional jazz. Hobart has not had a wealth of 'modern' jazz performers, and there has never been a large number of active jazz musicians in the city that are capable of performing bebop or any jazz vocabulary post-bebop. Pearce has stated (above) that he was uninterested in modern jazz, however perhaps in light of his circumstances, he was never exposed to modern jazz performers of a high quality.

### 3.3 On Pearce's Mature Style

Given the foregoing, we begin to see an encapsulation of Pearce's mature style. His economy of performance practice may well be due simply to time on task or lack thereof, as much as aesthetic development. Pearce notes that 'We were amateurs – semi-professional – and didn't depend on music for a living.'[137] John Sangster, in his inestimable recollection of the Australian jazz scene mentions his initial meeting with Pearce:

> My first go of the Barrelhouse mob on their home ground. Tom Pickering, nowadays the Parliamentary Librarian, was and is Head Lunatic, though I seem to remember a wondrous Taswegian trombone monster called Benny Cuebas who, like Billy Weston

[137] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 280.

> in the palmier days, would just go on playing in whatever position he arrived at after he fell over. And Ian Pearce, who'd played the trombone in Melbourne and Long with the Bells, playing the piano … meeting of the waters. Little creek meets big river. Except that little creek arrives full of famosity and big river is too busy having a good time running Fullers Bookstore to have been bothered.[138]

Pearce, in interview with Kuplis, talks about his distance from the realities of having to earn a commercial living through jazz, and his own attitude towards the music and the scene surrounding it:

> We had a sort of romantic view, at this distance, just listening to records, but the reality of domestic problems, marriages broken up or boredom of travelling hundreds of miles for one gig; and, if you were black in America, not being allowed to stay in reasonable hotel[s], and having to use the servant's entrance; and being abused in the south just for being there or having a white person in a black band or black person in a white band; and being away from family and wives – glad to be away sometimes and not others; when you consider all that, playing only once a week is terrific – you look forward to another night with the band having a few drinks and a few laughs.[139]

Despite having not performed with the regularity of the musicians who were the instigators of this stlye, and not having pursued music as a full time career with all the on-going

[138] Sangster, *Seeing The Rafters,* 81.
[139] Kuplis, *Ian Pearce Pianoman*, 281.

performance practice that this implies, Pearce displays a strong command of the idiom, coupled with his own particular aesthetic. In part due to circumstance, and in part due to his modalities of imitation, assimilation, and expression, Pearce arrived at a mature style of interpretation and reinterpretation of traditional jazz and its elements.

As evidenced throughout the foregoing chapter, the key materials found within Pearce's mature output are: the use of tenths (diatonic, chromatic, and broken), largely diatonic $6^{th}$ and $7^{th}$ chords, and dyads consisting of thirds, fifths, tri-tones and sevenths in the left hand; all of which are employed within a 'swing/stride bass' framework. This traditional jazz style pianistic modality is couched in Pearce's aesthetic of a 'dry' sound, stemming from a lack of use of the sustain pedal, and his choice of textures, and his variation of note length. Other key materials are the studied use of diatonic arpeggios for melodic invention and development, coupled with chromatic linking. Pearce's rhythmic phrasing is often less syncopated during the improvisatory sections, providing a clear contrast with the composed material. His harmonic framing is generally diatonic, following in the continuum of traditional jazz, however his compositions display a use of extended chromatic harmony, allowing further scope for interpretation and reinterpretation of traditional jazz styles, and pointing a way forward to further exploration in my own practice.

Pearce's modalities and circumstance, as discussed above, have influenced his formation as a mature artist and his choice of materials: extrapolation from limited materials, interfacing firstly with recorded materials as opposed to live models, initial employment of an 'imitation-ecstatic' performance modality, and his artistic isolation.

## Chapter 4

### Self-reflective Analysis

Having identified the key materials and performance modalities utilized in Pearce's mature style, my own artistic practice as an improviser, interpreter, and re-interpreter of traditional jazz style was investigated. The purpose of this self-reflective analysis was to uncover the ways in which the research has altered and influence my artistic endeavors, and to demonstrate how the research proposition was addressed through this practice-led interrogation of the key materials and modalities. In order to achieve this, my artistic output that was produced throughout the course of this research was investigated, with respect to the influence exerted by the research process, and the re-interpretation of the generative/reflective process of the research.

This section of the exegesis is structured chronological, examining the recorded artefacts from the early stages of research, which produced *The Last Sheiks*, through the middle period of research which produced a concert recording (solo piano), and saw the recording of *Post Matinee*, and to the final stages of research, during which another concert recording was produced, this time at *Jazz Lab* in Melbourne, Australia. The structure here is chronological in order to reveal the progress over time of the integration of the research findings into my performance practice, and my increasing ability to interpret and reinterpret. As was outlined in the methodology above, the acquisition of a performative jazz vocabulary requires imitation, and assimilation, which can then lead to expression. In addition, this chronological structure allows for a clear view of the reinterpretation of the

research findings through performance, and shedding light on the generative/reflective process that occurred.

### 4.1 Early Stages of Research – Studio Recording

The commercial release *The Last Sheiks*[140] by Leigh Barker was recorded in November 2013 as the culmination of a national tour, eight months following the commencement of the research. This particular ensemble[141] has been performing together in various iterations since 2008, and was recognized for its contribution to Australian jazz when it received a Bell award for 'Best Traditional Jazz Album' in 2011.[142] The recording comprises a raft of differing traditional jazz styles, following the groups' methodology of interpreting and re-interpreting early traditional jazz, as indicated by the name of the group.[143] This recording provides an opportunity to investigate the influence exerted by the research during the early stages of the study.

From the beginning of the research until this stage, research activities largely consisted of the accumulation of pertinent literature, immersive listening, and the commencement of the process of active assimilation of certain materials, namely the use of tenths (diatonic, chromatic and broken) in the left hand, and the use of a diatonic, arpeggiated approach to

[140] Barking Mad Music, BMM002, 2016
[141] Here I am referring to the core group of musicians surrounding Australian double bassist Leigh Barker, of which I am one. I first encountered Leigh in 2004, and have been performing with him ever since. From 2008 onwards, the core group consisted of myself, Leigh, Heather Stewart (violin and vocals), Eamon McNelis (trumpet), Don Stewart (trombone), and Sam Young (drums). This group was often augmented with John Scurry (guitar and banjo; the founder and leader of *John Scurry's Reverse Swing*, and other guests.
[142] The Bell awards were established in memory of renowned Australian jazz artist Graeme Bell.
[143] To be a 'Sheik', in the 1920s American vernacular that surrounded the jazz scene, was to be a 'hip' gentlemen, with overt romantic appeal.

melodic development in the right hand, coupled with chromatic linkage, as was uncovered and outlined above. This stage of development also reflects the traditional jazz language I had assimilated to date, and provides a means of tracking the influence of the research on my playing through noting the 'base-line' from which I began. At this stage, the research began to exert an influence on my interpretation of traditional jazz styles. The following examples can be considered as the product of this initial stage of immersive listening, and the passive assimilation of the materials discovered through research.

The first piece to be considered is *Tom Cat Blues* by Ferdinand Joseph LeMothe, otherwise known as Jelly Roll Morton. This ensemble had spent some considerable time exploring the repertoire of Morton, focusing on the output of his group *The Red Hot Peppers*, in order to assimilate some of the language of traditional jazz styles from the 1920s, as befits the purpose of the group. Initial result of immersive listening and passive assimilation are in evidence throughout this performance. Through this process, the elements of 'swing/stride' bass, tenths in the left hand, a drier sense of articulation overall, and certain aspects of Pearce's right hand language began to enter my performance practice in a limited capacity – I was actively attempting to recreate (or perhaps even ecstatically imitate) Pearce's melodic shapes and melodic vocabulary, but, to my reckoning, was falling short of the mark. Whilst these elements were not necessarily successfully incorporated at this stage, these key materials emerged nonetheless.

*Tom Cat Blues* consists of two sections – an A section that begins on the dominant, and continually returns to the tonic, and a B section that is comprised of a blues form modulating to the subdominant. Improvisation occurs over the A section.

Throughout the entirety of the track, a form of 'proto-stride' left hand can be heard. The basic pattern of left hand stride piano playing (as outlined above) is adhered to for the most part, and on occasion an attempt is made at the introduction of tenths in the left hand. For example, at 1:25 the left hand employs chromatic tenths ascending to the 3rd and 5th of the chord. Again at 1:39 the left hand performs a chromatic tenth run, this time descending chromatically from the tonic chord to the VI7 dominant. Also in evidence throughout the track is the 'dry' articulation in the left hand. The sustain pedal is avoided, resulting in much shorter note lengths in the left hand than would otherwise result from employing the sustain pedal. Throughout the improvisatory section of this track (1:54 – 2:54), elements of Pearce's right hand elements can be heard. The two opening phrases of the improvisation are descending arpeggios of the dominant chord, with the chord tones at the beginning of phrases joined by chromatic linking devices. Whilst these elements of Pearce's mature style were not actively incorporated into my performance practice at this stage, this provides an example of passive assimilation of several key concepts arising from the research.

The opening track on this particular release, *Poor Li'l Me*, also provides example of the emerging influence of the research findings on my performance practice. *Poor Li'l Me* from the 78rpm single of the same name, is a piece by Luis Russell and His Orchestra, originally featuring the vocals of Jesse Cryor.[144] Whilst this recording blends traditional jazz styles with a more modern approach, elements of the research findings can be observed. The opening section (wherein the rhythm section establishes the feel and tempo) begins with the piano left hand playing a standard stride pattern (0:00 – 0:03), before dissolving into a

[144] Parlophone, R2212, 1930.

more 'modern' comping style. The final statement of the melody through to the conclusion of the track (4:03 – 5:05) contains occasional moments of stride in the left hand; however, this is rather fractured and not yet developed. As above in *Tom Cat Blues*, the lack of usage of the sustain pedal is clearly evident through the entire performance. This could arguably be the most important development to date in my performance practice concerning traditional jazz styles. Whilst none of these elements were consciously embedded in my performance practice at the date of this recording, again, this is further evidence of the passive integration of elements of the research findings at this early stage in the research process.

### 4.2 Middle Stages of Research – Concert and Studio Recordings

Concert and studio recordings from the middle period of the research exhibit the accumulating influence of the research on my own artistic output. The concert recording discussed here was a solo piano recital at the Tasmanian Conservatorium on the 16th of May, 2015. The repertoire presented at this recital was a mixture of early jazz repertoire (including Jelly Roll Morton), works from the early swing period (repertoire from Billie Holiday's oeuvre), two works by Pearce, and two original compositions, one from my colleague Dr. Damien Kingston, and one of my own. The studio recording presented for discussion here is a commercial release on the Lionsharecords label by John Scurry's Reverse Swing, entitled *Post Matinee*[145]. This album consists entirely of compositions by Scurry, featuring the group Reverse Swing, and augmented by guest artists. The

[145] Lionsharecords, LSR20175, 2016.

investigation of particular tracks from both the concert and studio recording allows for an opportunity to examine the influence and the reinterpretation of the research findings being manifested through interpretation and improvisation following an extended period of research.

From the concert recording, the first performance to be discussed is that of Jelly Roll Morton's *Black Bottom Stomp*. This is the first example of much more concrete usage of the key materials and concepts uncovered in the research. Forming part of the research activities during this period of the research was the integration of key materials and concepts uncovered by the research.

*Black Bottom Stomp* is rendered here in truncated form from the original recording, and adapted for solo piano. The trio section (which is the 20 measure repeated form that modulates to the subdominant, beginning at 1:15) is used as a vehicle for improvisation. During the opening section of this improvisation, the left hand is performing a traditional stride pattern interspersed with broken tenths. From 1:35 to 1:42, the right hand improvisatory passages take the shape of diatonic arpeggiated lines, bestrewn with chromatic linking passages. At 2:16, the left hand is incorporating a clear broken tenths pattern as a means of textural variation. While these passages were not planned prior to the performance taking place, the observance of the key materials emerging from the research and their incorporation into my practice enabled this manner of improvisation to emerge.

Further examples of the integration of the key materials and concepts from the research can be evidenced in the performance of Pearce's own composition *Whatnot*. Throughout this performance, the left hand part is utilising broken tenths, interspersed with traditional stride patterns to provide textural differentiation and assist with the structural definition of the performance. During the stop-chorus section, the right hand vocabulary of restricted diatonicism with chromatic linkage is evident, and is being integrated into my melodic improvisatory language.

The next work to be considered, also an original from Pearce and entitled *A Little Something*, provides further evidence of the integration of the material and concepts uncovered through this research, namely the left hand techniques of stride and single note harmonic underpinning, used together for textural variation. During the improvisatory section of this piece (beginning from 0:57), the left hand can be heard beginning with long, single tones in the left hand, underpinning the right hand's outlining of the harmonic structures, and then transitioning to more traditional stride piano elements; and eventually merging these two conceptualisations. During this improvisation, Pearce's melodic ideas present in the composition are explored, and the key materials of diatonic arpeggation mixed with chromatic linkage and merged with my existing improvisatory vocabulary. This direct incorporation of the materials uncovered during research into my artistic practice was a primary goal of this research – as evidenced above, by the middle stages of research this process is bearing fruit.

Turning towards the notion of recontextualisation, the performance of *Marionette* will now be discussed. *Marionette* is a composition by my colleague Damien Kingston, with whom I

perform in a variety of contexts, most notably on the recording *Collosus* by Kingston/Boden/Haywood/Jackson.[146] This piece was rehearsed by the group, and a variety of differing textural and structural options were explored. As a direct result of this research, and the inclusion of traditional jazz styles into my performance practice, I suggested that we attempt this work in a faux-naïf stride-piano manner, eschewing the normal ballad style 'modern jazz' treatment for slow tempo works. The recorded work, and the solo performance of it included here, contain this 'stride piano' styling throughout, giving the work a unique character. This particular character led to the eventual titling of the work (which had remained untitled throughout the rehearsal process), as the recontextualistion of stride piano elements into this work had led to a loping, almost disjointed rhythmic underpinning, reminding the composer of a marionette figure, hence the title.

An examination of the commercial release *Post Matinee* by John Scurry's group 'Reverse Swing' reveals further evidence of the integration of the key concepts and materials from the research. The continuing influence of Pearce's modalities and conceptions can be heard during the piano improvisation on the lead track *Virology* (2:49 – 2:44). This composition of Scurry's is performed with respect to the traditional swing groups of the 1930s, yet retaining each improviser's particular approach. Throughout the piano solo improvisation, it is possible to hear the integration of Pearce's approach to melodic construction (diatonic arpeggiation coupled with chromatic linking) woven into the fabric of my existing bebop/swing hybrid language. In particular, the penultimate eight measures of the piano improvisation (3:26 – 3:36) display the integration of this approach clearly.

[146] Damien Kingston and Matt Boden, RG002, 2014.

The third selection on this release, *By Practised Skill*, also evidences the development of my melodic conception, and the integration of materials from the research. During the piano improvisation (2:10 – 2:44), the melodic contours closely follow the arpeggiated chord changes with clear, idiomatic chromatic linking passages. Considering this improvisation in light of the research evidences a reinterpretation of the findings, demonstrated here as a clear driver in the melodic invention of the improvisation and integrated into my artistic voice.

The title track of *Post Matinee* provides an example of the integration of the research findings into my practice by way of demonstrating a reinterpretation of the comping[147] role of the piano in a drummer-less traditional jazz ensemble. During the entirety of the second strain (0:55 – 4:49), I employed a variety of approaches to the accompanying role, reinterpreting the findings of the research. From traditional stride patterns, broken tenths, and texture variation arrived at through the use of differing note lengths, the reinterpretation of the comping role of the piano here is a direct result of this research. I had prior experience comping in a variety of settings, however this was more of a modern approach. For example, I had previously restricted myself to the middle range of the piano, and to more limited rhythmic palette. Continued exposure via active listening to Pearce's mature style has influenced my artistic conception, allowing for the integration of a much wider variety of comping techniques.

[147] 'Comping' is common parlance amongst jazz musicians for 'accompanying'.

The brief piano improvisation during track 13, *A Walk Around Tom* (1:24 – 1:48) presents an example of the integration of the research into my artistic process in the left hand 'trombone line' that carries throughout much of this passage. Prior to commencing this research, my left hand capabilities as a jazz pianist were limited to 'modern' style comping, consisting of A and B voicings[148] performed within a particular rhythmic context.[149] Throughout this passage, the left hand plays a counter melody that underpins the right hand improvisation, providing harmonic contextualisation, in the manner of the trombone part of a traditional New Orleans group's front line.[150] Prior to the commencement of this research, this was not present in my artistic conception; this expansion upon my sound imagination and manipulation of materials has been achieved through the assimilation of the materials and approaches uncovered and considered through this research, and has permitted the reinterpretation of not only traditional jazz styles, but the reinterpretation of all material within my artistic practice as viewed through this prism.

The final track to be considered from *Post Matinee* is *Sad Songs*. This is perhaps the clearest summative example of the integration of the research findings into my artistic practice to date. Through my immersion in Pearce's mature style, I developed a personal vocabulary of traditional jazz piano approaches including the use of tenths in the left hand (in all their discussed forms), a more idiomatic use of diatonicism and chromatic linking in the right

[148] 'A' and 'B' voicings here refer to the common practice amongst jazz musician trained in a higher-education jazz program (or through the study of common text books) of copying the left hand voicing patterns of the bebop and post-bebop pianists. An 'A' voicing is built on the 3rd of the chord, and a 'B' voicing is built upon the 7th of the chord. Both voicings are usually restricted to three or four notes, and are normally executed within the range of approximately C3 to C5.

[149] 'Rhythmic context' here refers to the performance of certain common clave 'sentences', such as the consistent off beats of Red Garland's left hand comping.

[150] A 'traditional New Orleans frontline' would be composed of cornet, clarinet, and trombone.

hand, a harmonic vocabulary that sits more within the framework of traditional jazz as discussed above, and a pianistic texture that is drier than that I was using previously following my incorporation of Pearce's lack of pedal usage; all as viewed through the prism of Pearce. Throughout *Sad Songs* I employed a variety of the techniques outlined above, integrating Pearce's modalities with my existing vocabulary, demonstrating a reinterpretation of traditional jazz styles in the continuum of original Australian jazz composition and performance. It is highly significant to my artistic practice that I perform and record with Scurry, as he is a leading light of the Australian traditional jazz scene, being one of the longest-standing members of the Australian jazz group *The Red Onion Jazz Band*.[151] *The Onions*, as they are colloquially known, were part of the 'second revival' in Australian traditional jazz. Therefore, to be performing and recording alongside a musician of Scurry's ilk is to form part of the lineage of the Australian traditional jazz landscape – and through the process of this research, I have attempted to construct a personal artistic voice that bridges the timespan from the earliest Australian jazz pioneers through to today.

### 4.3 Latter Stages of Research – Concert Recording

An examination of a concert recording produced during the latter stages of research yields an opportunity to examine the influence of the research on my artistic output and practice following an extended period of time given over to the subject material. Following this extended period of imitation, assimilation, integration, and reinterpretation of the research findings, this concert recording displays a more thorough and well-rounded synthesis of the

[151] For further information on *The Red Onions Jazz Band*, see Stevens, PhD diss., 2000.

key concepts and materials. This concert was recorded at the Melbourne venue *The Jazz Lab* with the Leigh Barker Band on the 3rd of May, 2018. Given my long-standing musical relationship with Barker, and that this group's focus is the interpretation and reinterpretation of pre-WWII repertoire, this concert recording is the ideal vehicle through which to examine the integration of the research into my artistic practice. It is also worth noting that the early stages of research culminated in a recording also with Barker (in point of fact, all musicians present on the first recording examined here are performing in this concert recording, with the exception of cornetist Eamon McNelis), and that I feel that these long-term musical relationships are essential in the development of an artistic voice of one's own – however, a more thorough investigation of this idea is outside the scope of the present study.

The first work to be discussed is a Barker original entitled *Jason's Swanage Siesta*. Throughout this track, a wide variety of materials from the research findings are integrated into the performance. Traditional stride patterns are utilized, as are the facets of arpeggiation and chromatic linkage in order to outline the harmonic structure whilst creating melodic motifs. Throughout the piano improvisation (2:58 – 3:53), thirds and sevenths are utilized as both harmonic underpinning and melodic devices, a key feature of Pearce's mature style. Broken 10th can be heard employed in the left hand part. Given that this is a full band work, with a rhythm section comprising double bass, banjo, and drums, I chose to employ the left hand less as a rhythmic driver and more as a harmonic outline, as can be observed in Pearce's mature style as outlined above. As this is an original work by Barker in the traditional 12 bar blues form (for the improvisatory section), it is an ideal vehicle for which to observe the integration of the melodic concepts of Pearce's mature

style. Through this research and the acquisition of a greater understanding of traditional jazz piano styles as viewed through Pearce's mature output, I have been able to allow a greater authenticity to infuse my artistic vision whilst retaining and modifying my existing musical vocabulary to fit the circumstances.

The next piece in question is *Chinatown*, which is this group's reinterpretation of the jazz standard. Throughout this track, I have incorporated many elements of Pearce's mature style, including traditional stride patterns, diatonic tenths, chromatic tenths, broken tenths, closed-position triads and diatonic $6^{th}$ and $7^{th}$ chords, arpeggiation of chord tones linked by chromatic passages as a melodic device, and a textural palette based around the variation of note lengths. Noteworthy too is the complete absence of the usage of the sustain pedal. Prior to commencing this research, I relied heavily on the sustain pedal as a means of generating texture, and as a means to cover up either poor technique, or an inability to bridge certain sections of composed or improvised material. I have integrated into my artistic practice Pearce's non-use of the sustain pedal, and currently eschew it completely when interpreting and reinterpreting traditional jazz styles. This provides much more rhythmic drive and textural clarity, especially during works that are of a fast tempo.
This research has allowed me to expand on my artistic voice through a thorough exploration of the notion of diatonic arpeggiation, and how this is employed in traditional jazz styles. The opening phrases of the piano improvisation in *Chinatown* (3:09 – 3:24) demonstrate this assimilated capacity. Whereas previously I would have attempted to colour the rather simple harmonic rhythm of *Chinatown* with a far more chromatic approach, here I am able to focus on diatonic melodic development through the uncovering of Pearce's mature solutions to melodic structuring. This mode of diatonic melodic development is aided by

chromatic linking passages, as displayed in Pearce's mature output. An example of my assimilation of this occurs at 3:13, wherein I execute a descending chromatic phrase that links the previous melodic material to the dominant chord. This manner of chord spelling and linking was not present in my playing prior to this research, and I was thus unable to authentically interpret or reinterpret traditional jazz styles, as I did not possess an appropriate vocabulary from which to build upon. The results of this research on my artistic practice are profound – I am now able to interpret traditional jazz materials and original materials, and reinterpret the same through my acquisition of the materials and concepts of Pearce's mature style discovered through this research in concert with my existing jazz vocabulary.

The final work to be considered here is *Stevedore Stomp*. This rendering of the Duke Ellington classic encapsulates the assimilation of many facets of the research findings. Again, I have incorporated many elements of Pearce's mature style, including traditional stride patterns, diatonic tenths, chromatic tenths, broken tenths, closed-position triads and diatonic $6^{th}$ and $7^{th}$ chords, arpeggiation of chord tones linked by chromatic passages as a melodic device, and a textural palette based around the variation of note lengths. The brief piano improvisation (beginning at 2:09) demonstrates a far greater understanding of melodic development in the context of traditional jazz reinterpretation. The melodic statements here are far more assured than at the beginning of this research, and the harmonic content is more stylistically appropriate for this manner of reinterpretation, drawing not only on my existing pianistic vocabulary, but also incorporating materials and concepts uncovered in the research. Throughout the rest of the track, I play a supporting role to the ensemble performance and the other instrumental soloists. Here, I am

employing traditional stride patterns, interspersed with chromatic, diatonic, and broken tenths, and a harmonic underpinning based upon Pearce's use of triads, fifths, and diatonic sixths and sevenths.

Throughout all of the examples listed above from the various stages of this research, diverse levels of influence, interpretation, and reinterpretation are evident. The materials and key concepts uncovered throughout the research gave a means of furthering my artistic vision, and expanding on my capabilities as an interpreter and reinterpreter of traditional jazz piano styles, as observed through the prism of Ian Pearce's mature output. This research has not only expanded my artistic sensibilities and capabilities; it has also allowed me to arrive at a greater power of expression.

# Chapter 5 - Conclusion

## 5.1 Conclusion

The purpose of this research was twofold: to document processes of experiential learning through performance, and to investigate Ian Pearce's mature output as a case study in order to uncover a method of interpretation and reinterpretation of traditional jazz within the context of Tasmanian jazz heritage, thereby contextualizing the practice-led research. Given that the research was practice led, the intention of investigating this concept was to expand upon and further my interpretive, expressive, and improvisatory capabilities.

The decision was made to examine an historical model as a means of efficiently addressing the research proposition, and after due consideration, the mature output of Ian Pearce was selected as a case study; specifically, the recorded piano solos on *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III – Ian Pearce*. Once this selection had been made, it was decided that an investigation of the influence of circumstance, and transcription and analysis of the solo piano tracks from the aforementioned album provided the best methods of responding to the propositions posed by the research. The analysis provided key materials and concepts that could subsequently be incorporated into my artistic practice, thus leading to a means of reinterpreting the findings of the research, the creation of a body of recorded work and an expanded expressive and artistic capacity. The purpose of this chapter is to outline the conclusions drawn from the investigation of circumstance, the transcription and analysis, the influence of the research and its findings on my own artistic practice, the outcomes of

the research, and to point towards further possibilities for research proceeding from this study.

Key materials uncovered throughout this research include the use of tenths (diatonic, chromatic, and broken), diatonic $6^{th}$ and $7^{th}$ chords, and dyads consisting of thirds, fifths, tri-tones and sevenths in the left hand; all of which are employed within a 'swing/stride bass' framework. The use of a 'dry' sound, stemming from a lack of use of the sustain pedal is central to the textural aesthetic of Pearce, and is a further key element of his mature output, coupled with his variation of note length. Other key materials are the studied use of diatonic arpeggiation for melodic invention and development, that is interwoven with chromatic linking. The careful use of syncopation was uncovered – this was of prime importance when considering the reintegration of the key materials into my own artistic practice. Given my largely post-bebop musical education in jazz, this proved immensely useful to study. The judicious use of diatonic harmony, and the sparing use of chromatic extensions was a further set of key materials uncovered here.

Considering the circumstance of the chosen model and their method of imitation, assimilation, and expression provided one means of addressing the research proposition. The key notion of circumstance as a partial determining factor on the development of a musical vocabulary sheds light on notions of decontextualisation, and is ultimately a marker along the path towards further clarification of an Australian jazz sound, and more specifically, a Tasmanian interpretation and reinterpretation of traditional jazz. Locating Pearce within the historical narrative of jazz performance practice in Australia allows for the beginnings of a more accurate location of Tasmanian jazz, and its distinctiveness. Given that

Tasmania's jazz practitioners were operating on the periphery of a country that itself was on the periphery in terms of jazz's geographical centres, this artistic isolation coupled with a scarcity of source materials, and a modality of extrapolating from incomplete data, I posit that there is an identifiable Tasmanian jazz sound – within the broad church of traditional jazz styles. Pearce's initial encounter with traditional jazz, his peer group, and his artistic isolation were all contributing factors to his development of musical materials. By way of assimilating information from limited materials and limited access to live models, engaging in 'imitation-ecstatic' performance practice, and pursuing a modality of extrapolation from incomplete data, Pearce arrived at a mature style that, while clearly located within the parlance of traditional jazz, was nevertheless distinctive and unique, owing in part to his artistic isolation.

This examination of circumstance has aided the self-reflective component of this research, in that I am located within a similar set of circumstances, and, albeit given much greater access to source materials in a technological sense, have had to follow a similar methodology in order to undertake the assimilation and integration of the jazz vernacular into my own artistic practice. By investigating Pearce's materials and modalities and directly applying them to my performance practice, I have heightened my awareness of Tasmanian jazz heritage and my place within it, continuing to interpret and reinterpret traditional jazz within a Tasmanian jazz heritage context. From my initial contact with jazz, and my initial contact with Pearce as a teenager, through to my return to Hobart following an extended stay in first Melbourne and then Europe, I can, with some degree of confidence, locate my artistic practice within the Tasmanian traditional jazz continuum. I was fortunate to hear Pearce and his peers in their mature output phase as a developing musician. Following my

development and travel, I am now once again firmly embedded within the Tasmanian jazz community, pursuing a similar path to Pearce; whilst I cannot assume to be so presumptuous as to say that I am 'continuing the lineage' or some such cliché, I have and will continue to pursue the interpretation and reinterpretation of traditional jazz, aware of my location within the context of Tasmania.

The uncovering of key materials and modalities, and their integration into a generative/reflective practice methodology has enabled a means of reinterpreting the research findings. Pearce's mature output shows a high order of sophistication and control, and a clear set of materials and modalities (mentioned above) that constitute an observable style, revealing themselves as musical choices. This goes in part to responding to the research proposition of uncovering a method of interpreting and reinterpreting traditional jazz within the context of Tasmanian jazz heritage – I have been able to subsequently integrate these materials and modalities into my own performance practice and therefore locate my own artistic output within this heritage framework, with the ultimate aim of adding to it and advancing it in a meaningful manner.

In the spirit of concluding a research project, I would like to hypothesize as to the facets of Tasmanian jazz, and to its identifiable sound. Given the key points of artistic isolation, a lack of access to direct sources (jazz musicians performing live), a particular peer group of like-minded souls, and the notion of extrapolation from incomplete data as a modality of imitation and assimilation, I feel that Tasmanian jazz (and here I speak to the interpretation and reinterpretation of traditional jazz styles) displays at once a certain gravitas and authenticity, coupled with a sparser and less dense texture than that of its mainland (the

term Tasmanians use to describe the rest of Australia) counterparts, or indeed compared to the original recorded artefacts. As was discussed above, the fact that most jazz musicians in Tasmania operate on an amateur basis also lends a certain character to the music: Tasmania's jazz musicians have historically held 'day jobs', and have not been forced to scrounge and hustle for work – I posit that this leads in part to a more relaxed character in the music, and also a more 'studied' approach. Pearce, and Pickering, had the time and resources to pursue the exploration of lesser-known material, and could spend time composing – luxuries not often afforded to the aspirational 'professional' musician trying to make ends meet. The performance of jazz for Tasmanians, especially of the traditional jazz variety is an intellectual pursuit as opposed to a commercial concern. To speculate further, I feel there to be a type of 'innocence' to the sound of Tasmanian jazz, an unblemished, almost romantic sound that speaks to the mythology of jazz as much to the daily reality of its performance practice. I also consider that the initial receivers of jazz in Tasmania who decided to pursue the performance of the music did so at a time before jazz was codified, as it appears today, and therefore may have felt more at ease 'making it up as they go along' rather than feeling the weight of a rule book on their shoulders. Jazz offers a unique possibility for self-expression.

The impact of this research on my artistic practice manifested in multiple ways. As an interpreter and reinterpreter of traditional jazz, I assimilated and reinterpreted the aforementioned materials and modalities into my performance practice. This broadening of my artistic palette enabled an expanded expressive ability, providing a method of reinterpreting the research findings in performance which can be applied to my continuing artistic practice. The application of the research findings to my performance practice has

also enabled an expanded horizon as to the possibilities of the integration of Tasmanian jazz heritage performance practice within a wider framework of modern jazz genres, as was briefly touched upon in the discussion of *Marionette* above. The impact and the reinterpretation of the research findings, corroborated by the recorded artefacts produced during the course of this study, have markedly influenced my artistic practice, enabling an expanded ability to interpret and reinterpret traditional jazz, locate my practice within a heritage framework, apply the findings in a tangential manner, produce new works, and present an artistic communication.

The outcomes and outputs stemming from this research are numerous. The production of new artistic works in the form of two commercially released compact discs, and two concert performances (in direct relation to this research), in addition to many public performances shaped directly or indirectly by this research in the normal course of my continuing artistic practice. In addition, the concert recording made at *The Jazz Lab* will be prepared for commercial release in 2019. This collection of new knowledge is a major outcome of this research. The body of transcriptions produced throughout the course of this research are also a clear outcome. Transcriptions of this nature concerning this body of work are rare, and prior to the undertaking of this research, difficult to acquire. This body of new knowledge is henceforth available to interested parties. The analysis surrounding Pearce's circumstance and location within the context of Tasmanian jazz heritage is available to those wishing to investigate this area further. A considerable literature list encompassing the subject at hand is present in the bibliography, providing an extensive source of reading matter for interested parties.

Looking forward, the new knowledge produced throughout the course of this research gives rise to avenues for further research. The interrogation of circumstance as a determining factor in the development of style is an approach that could be applied to other artists, whether individual or ensembles for a case study or to aid in a generative/reflective experiential learning cycle. The approach to transcription and analysis could similarly be applied to both individual artists and ensembles. The uncovered materials and modalities could be adapted into educational materials, providing an historical and contextual framework for the assimilation, integration and expression of traditional jazz styles within the context of Tasmanian jazz heritage, and more broadly within the context of Australian jazz. This research has provided me with a greater insight into the notions of artistic identity as it relates to circumstance, and the assimilation of a musical vocabulary given the problems of artistic isolation. As an interpreter and reinterpreter of traditional jazz styles, I will continue to produce new work informed by this research through the continuation of my artistic practice in performing and recording, and through the continuation of my academic career in this area of practice-led research. In particular, I will continue the research themes of place-based music making, with a focus on Tasmanian jazz heritage.

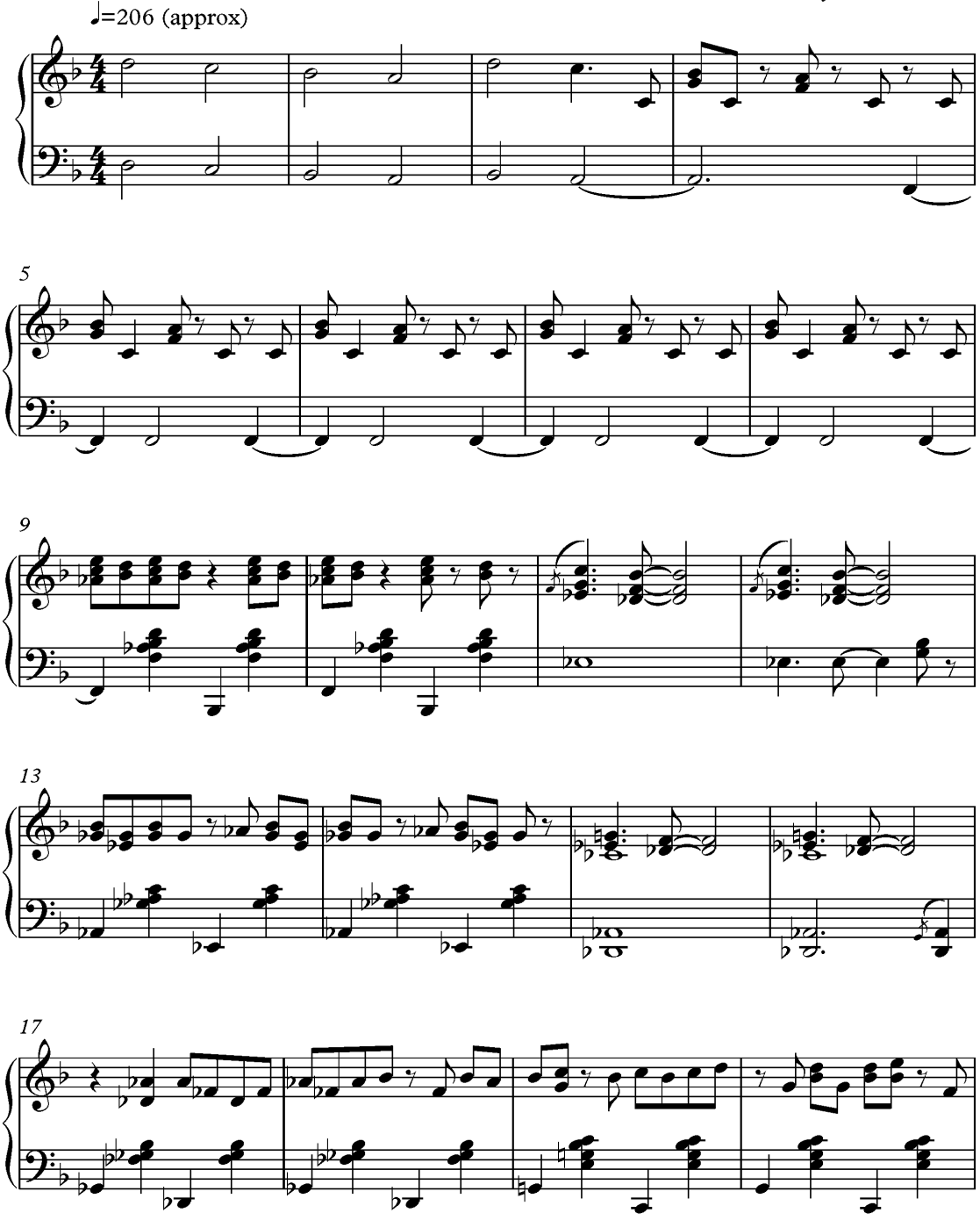
**Appendix 1**

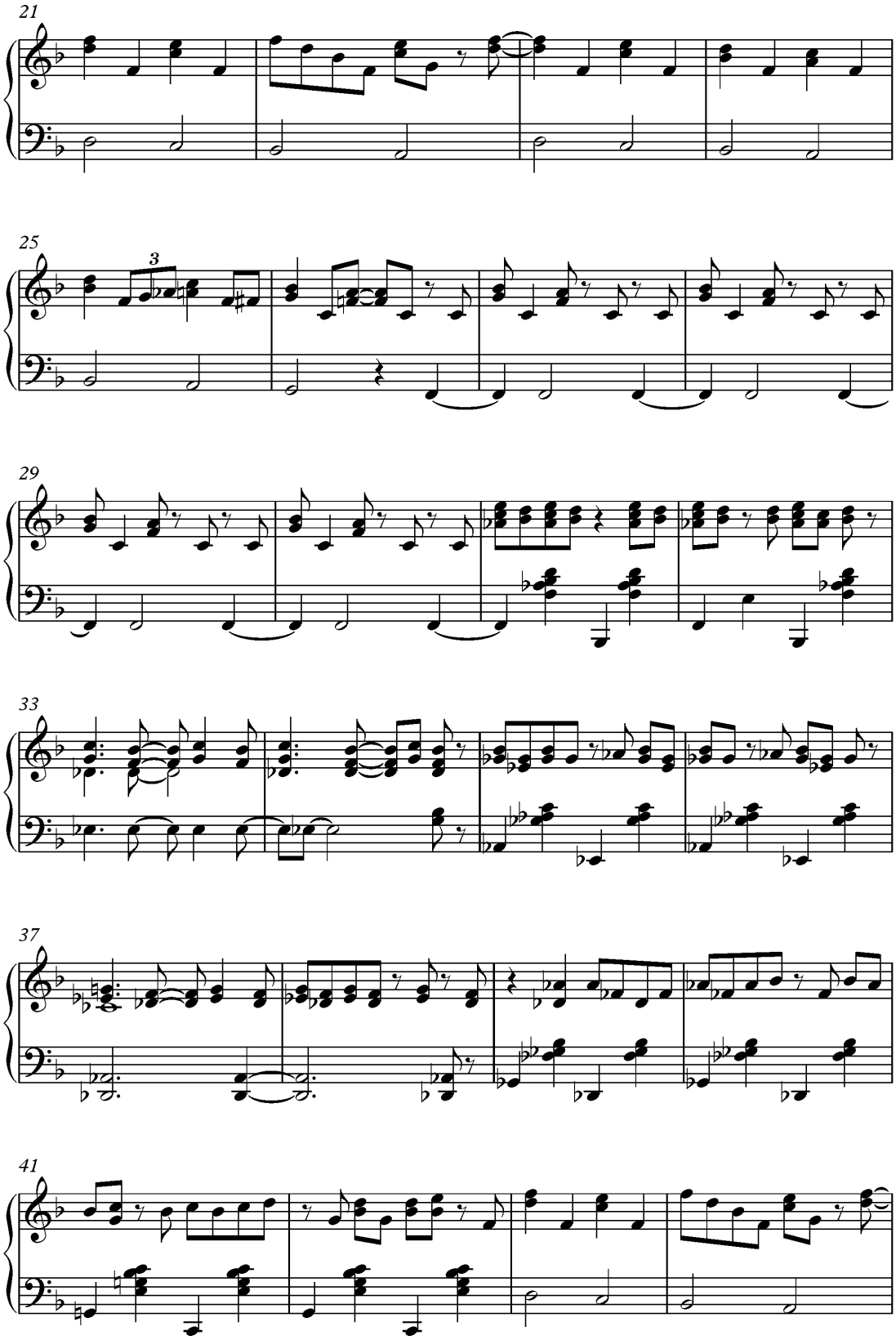
**Transcriptions**

# The Caper of Commerce

(Ian Pearce on *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III - Ian Pearce, Track 1)*

Composed by Ian Pearce
Transcribed by Matthew Boden

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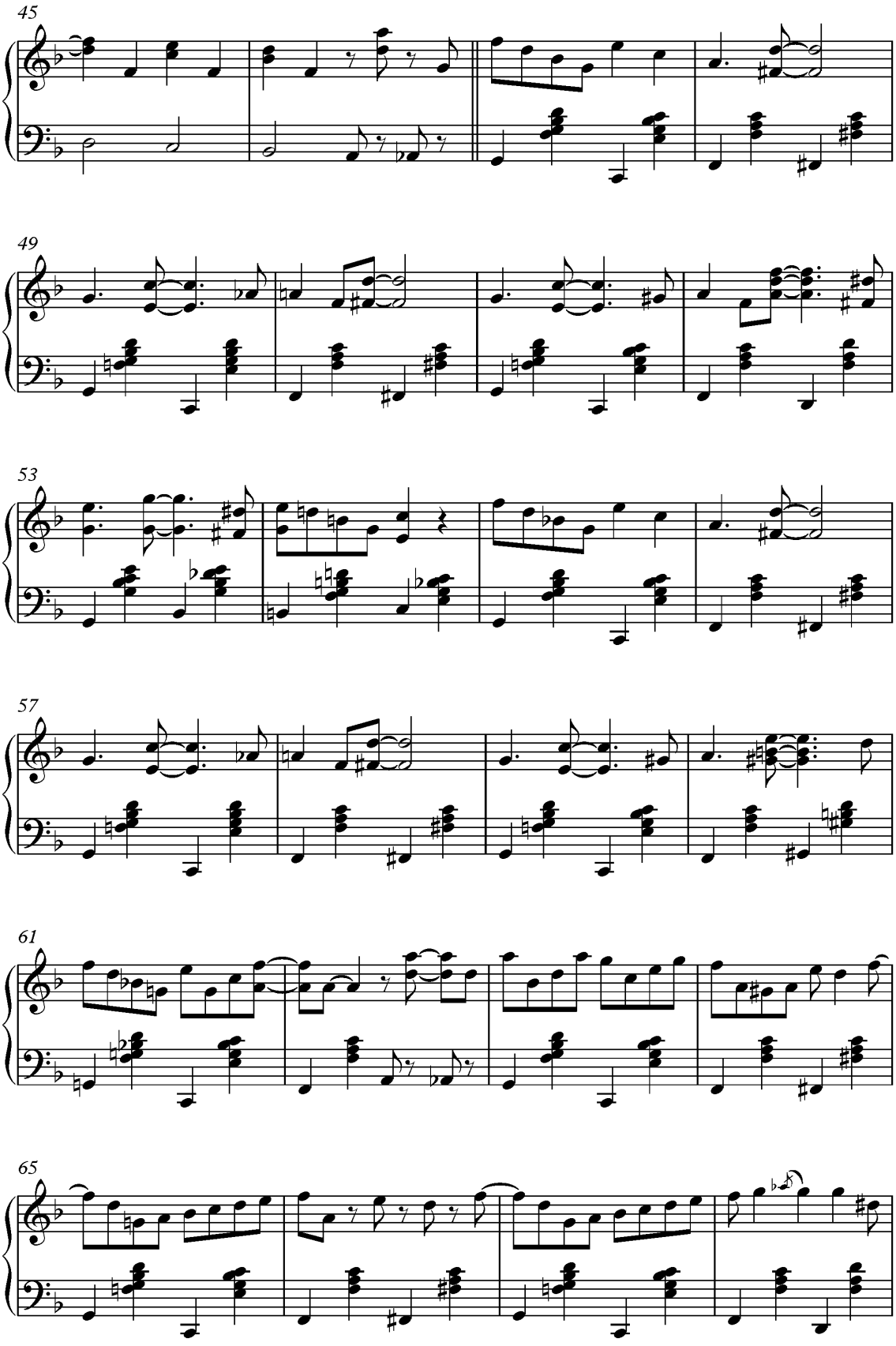
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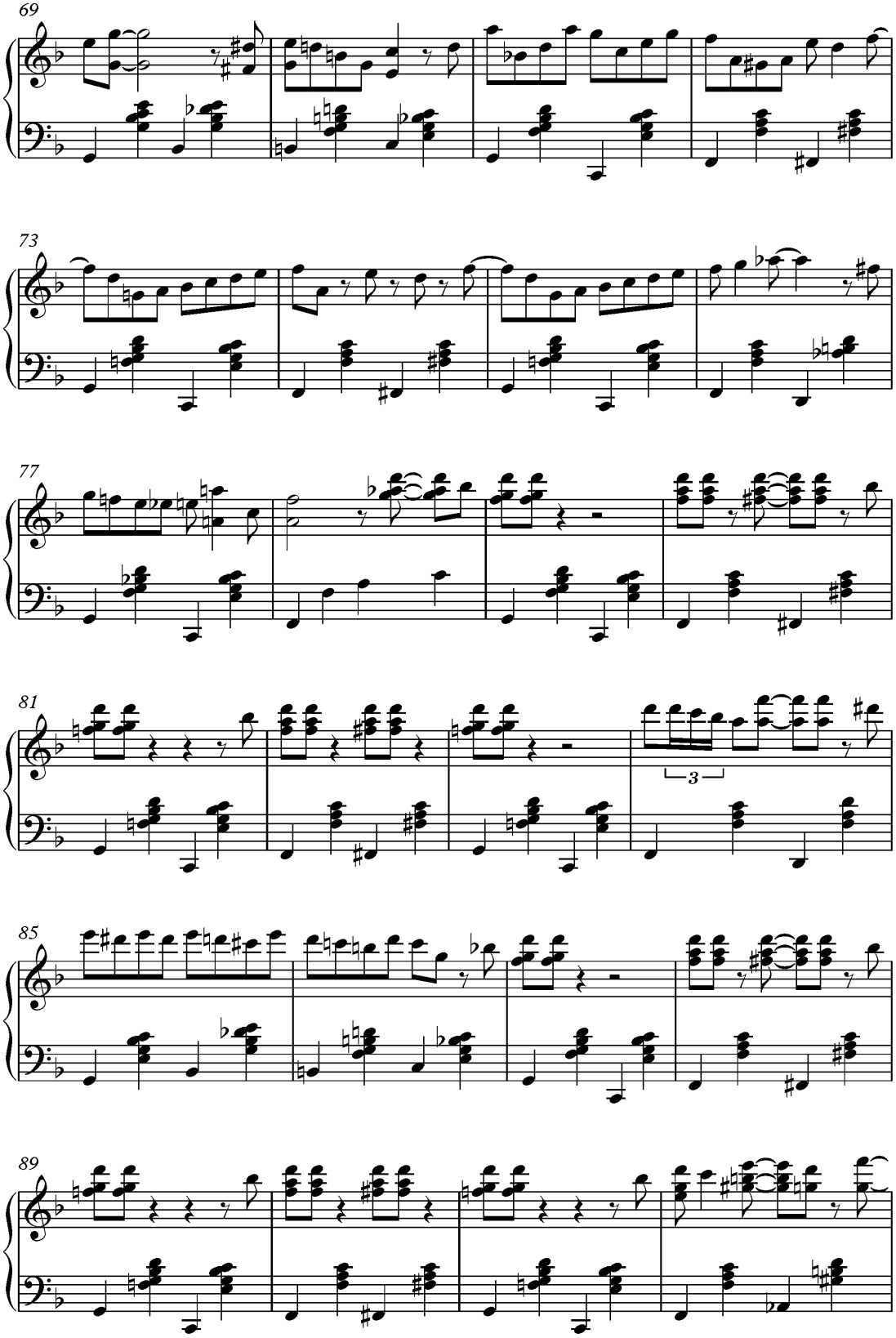

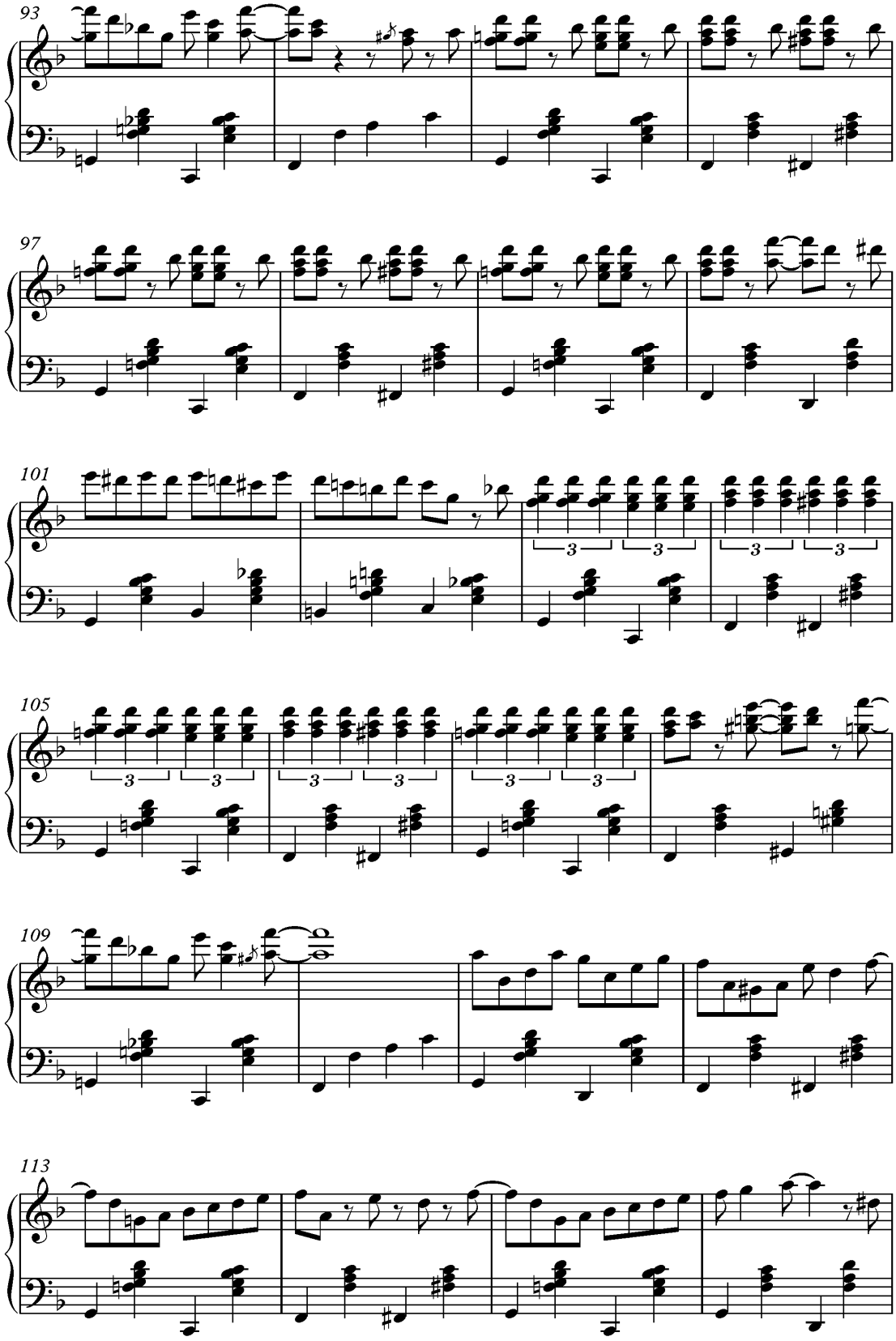
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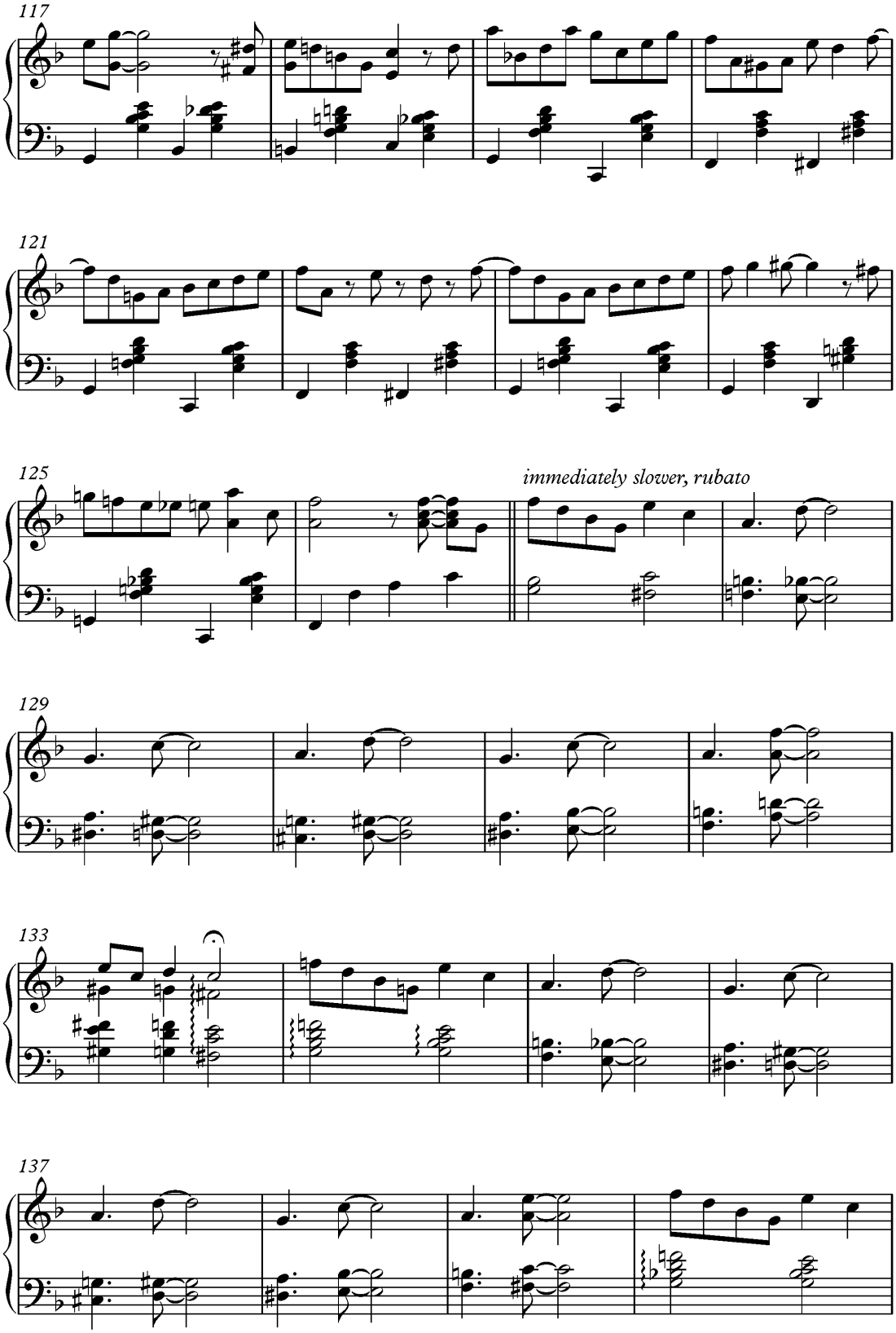
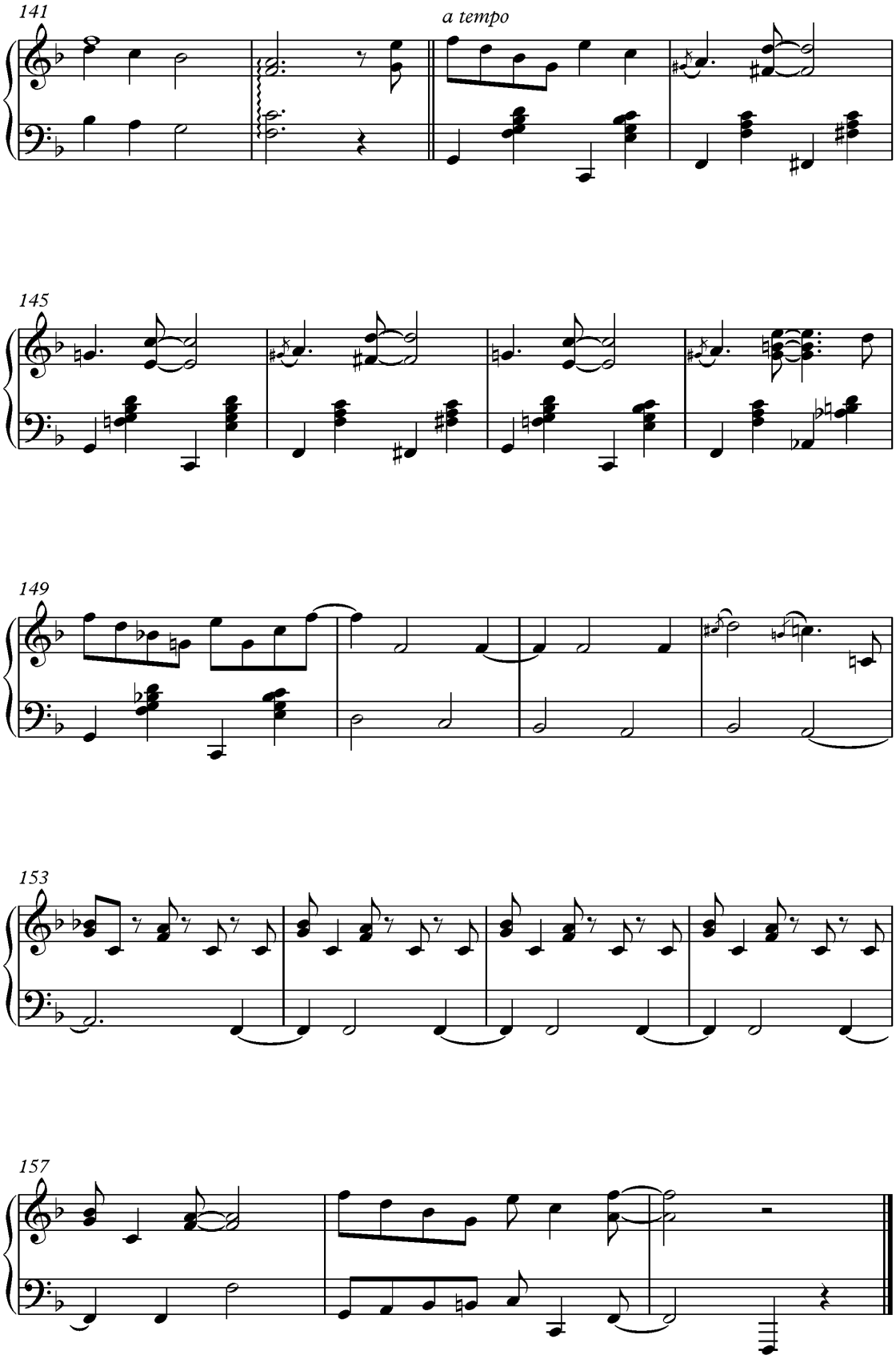
*The Caper of Commerce*




141
a tempo
145
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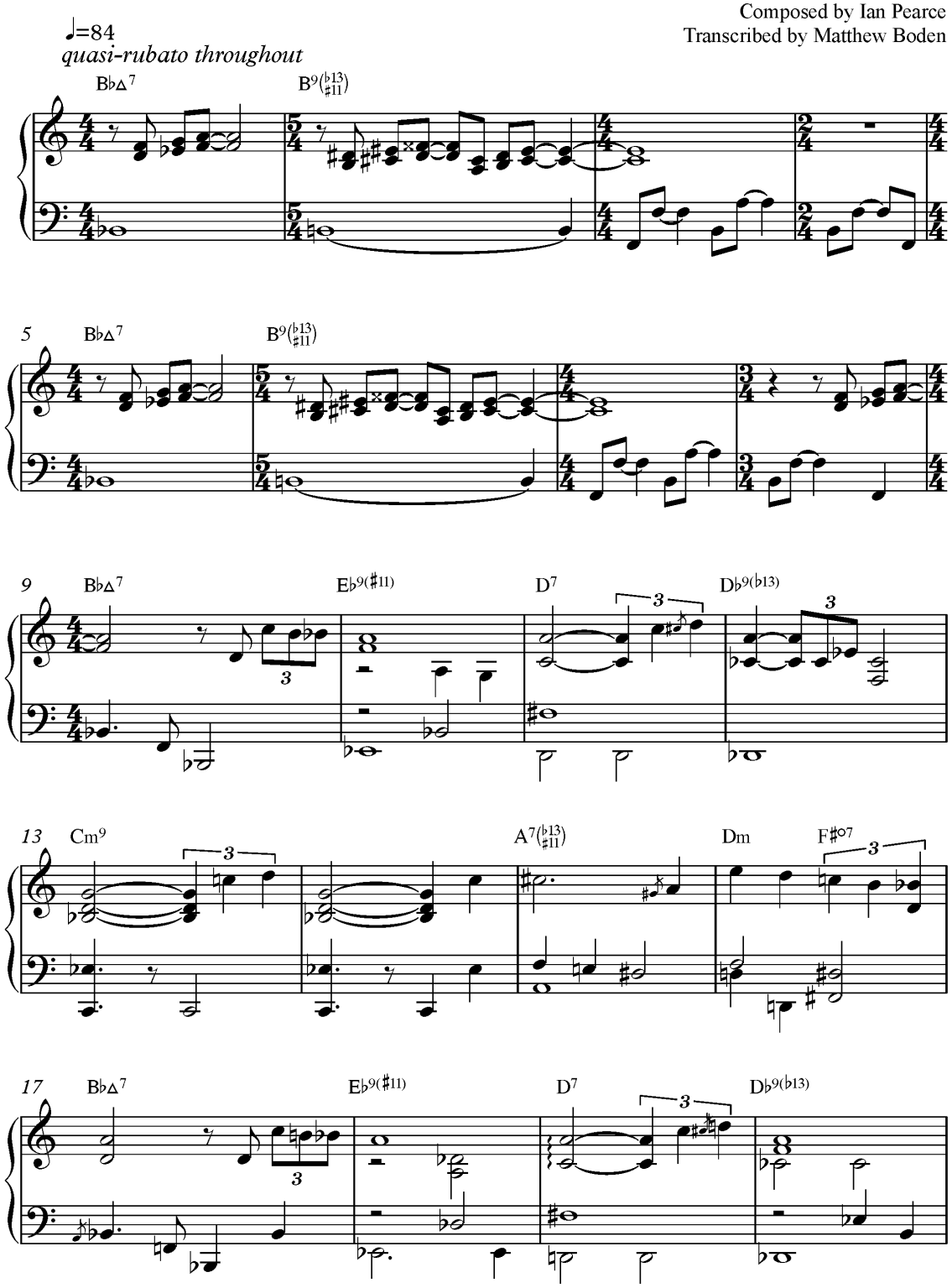
157

# Warm Afternoon

(Ian Pearce on *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III - Ian Pearce,* Track 2)

Composed by Ian Pearce
Transcribed by Matthew Boden



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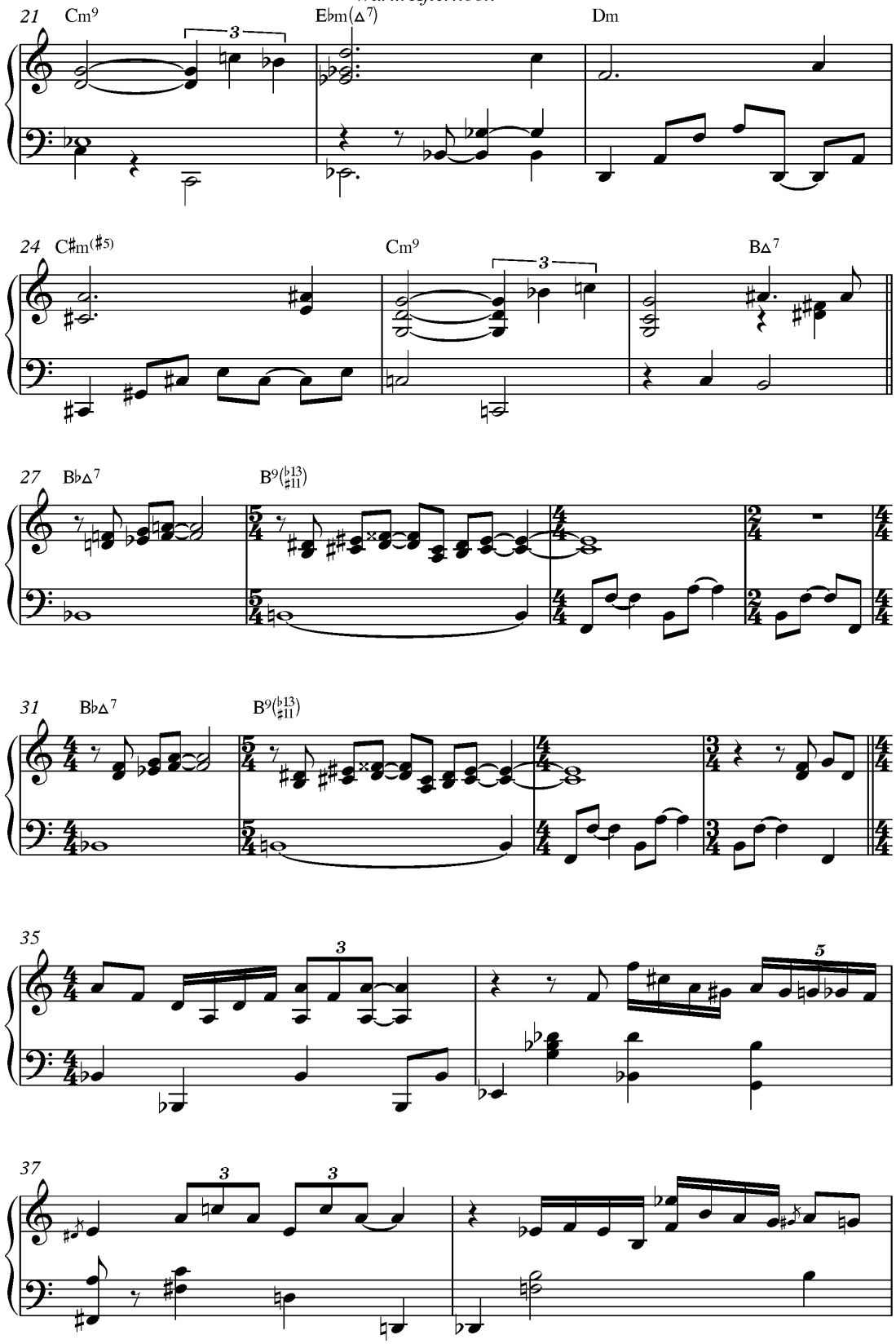
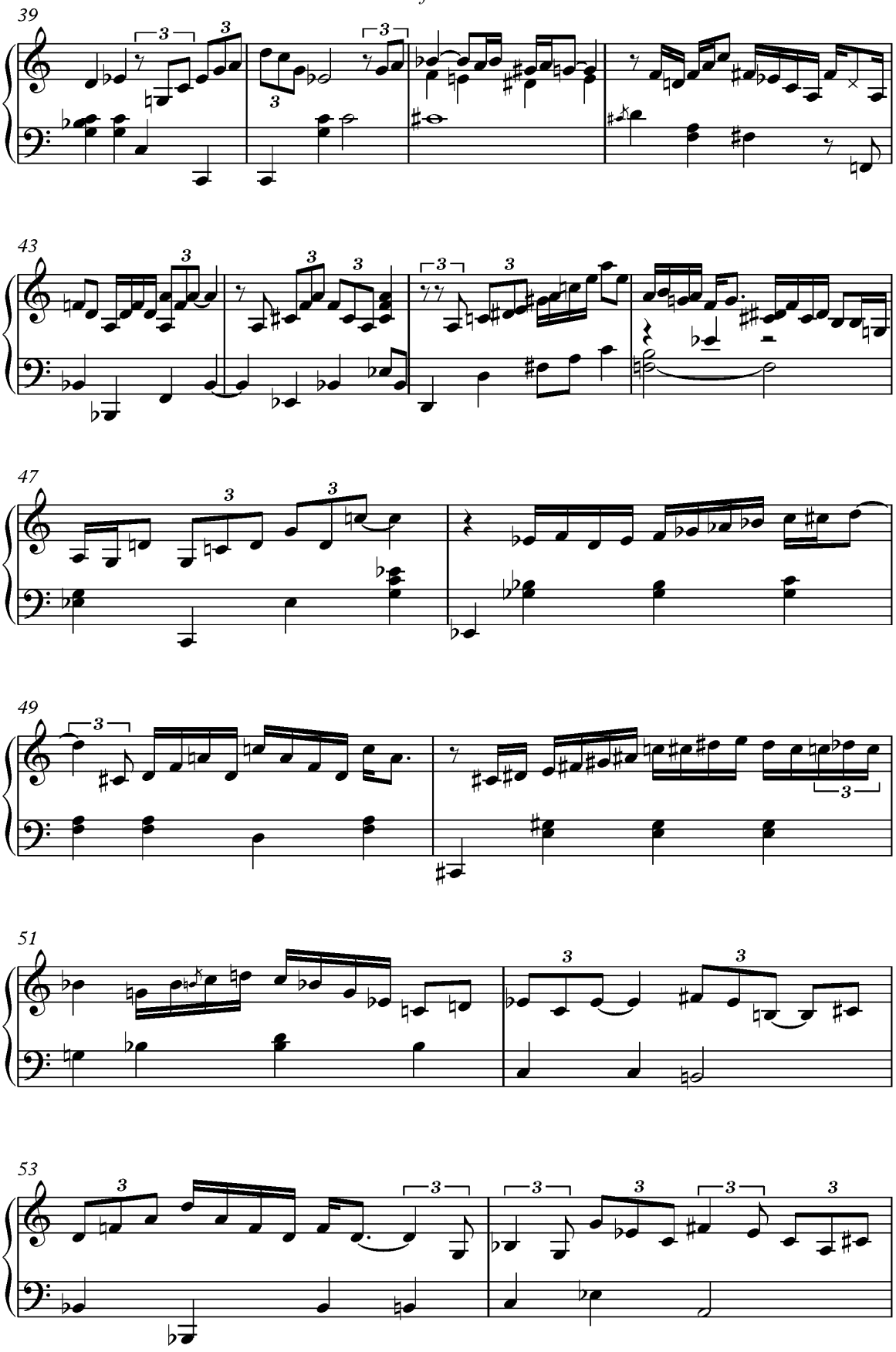
*Warm Afternoon*

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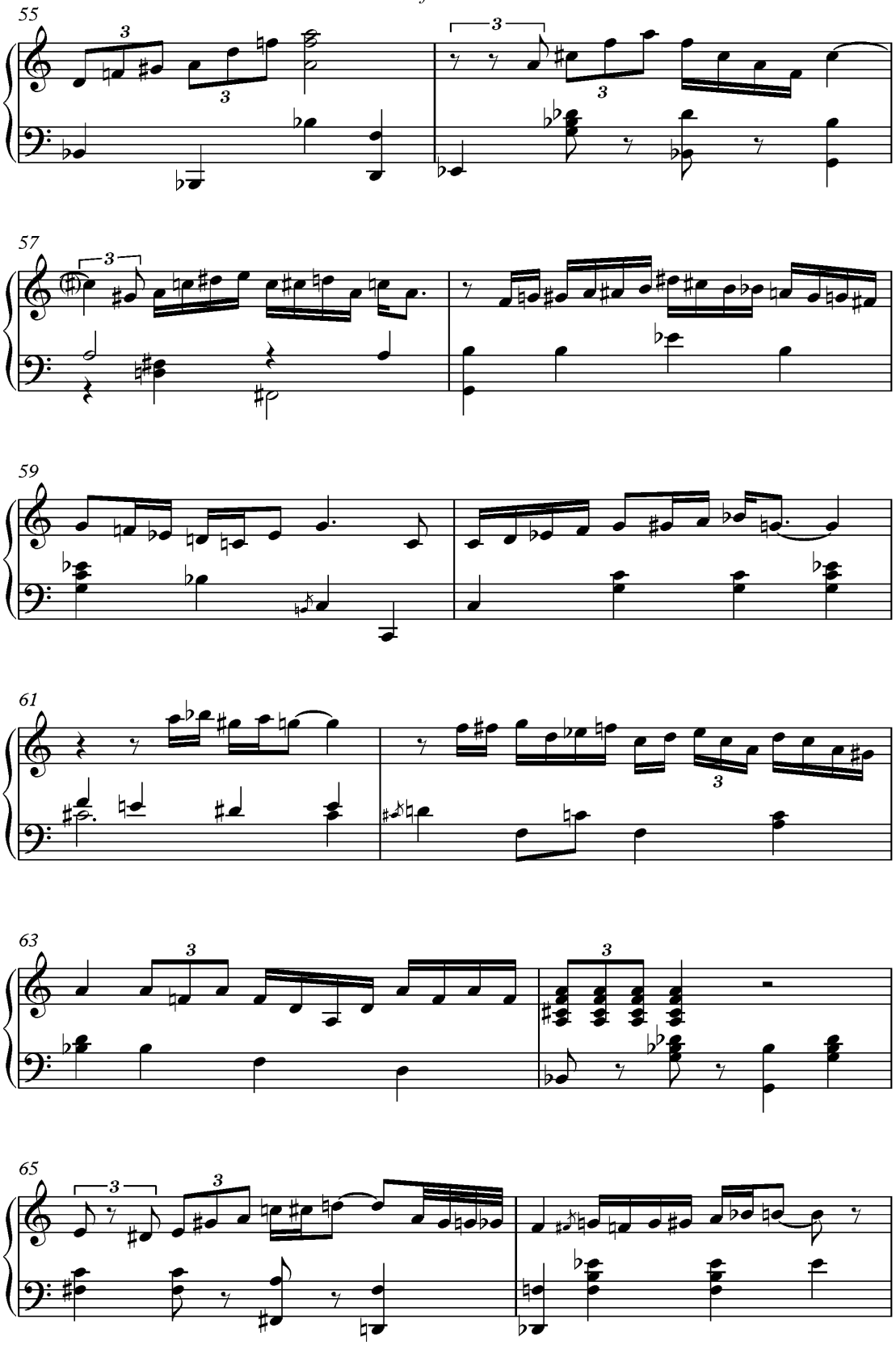
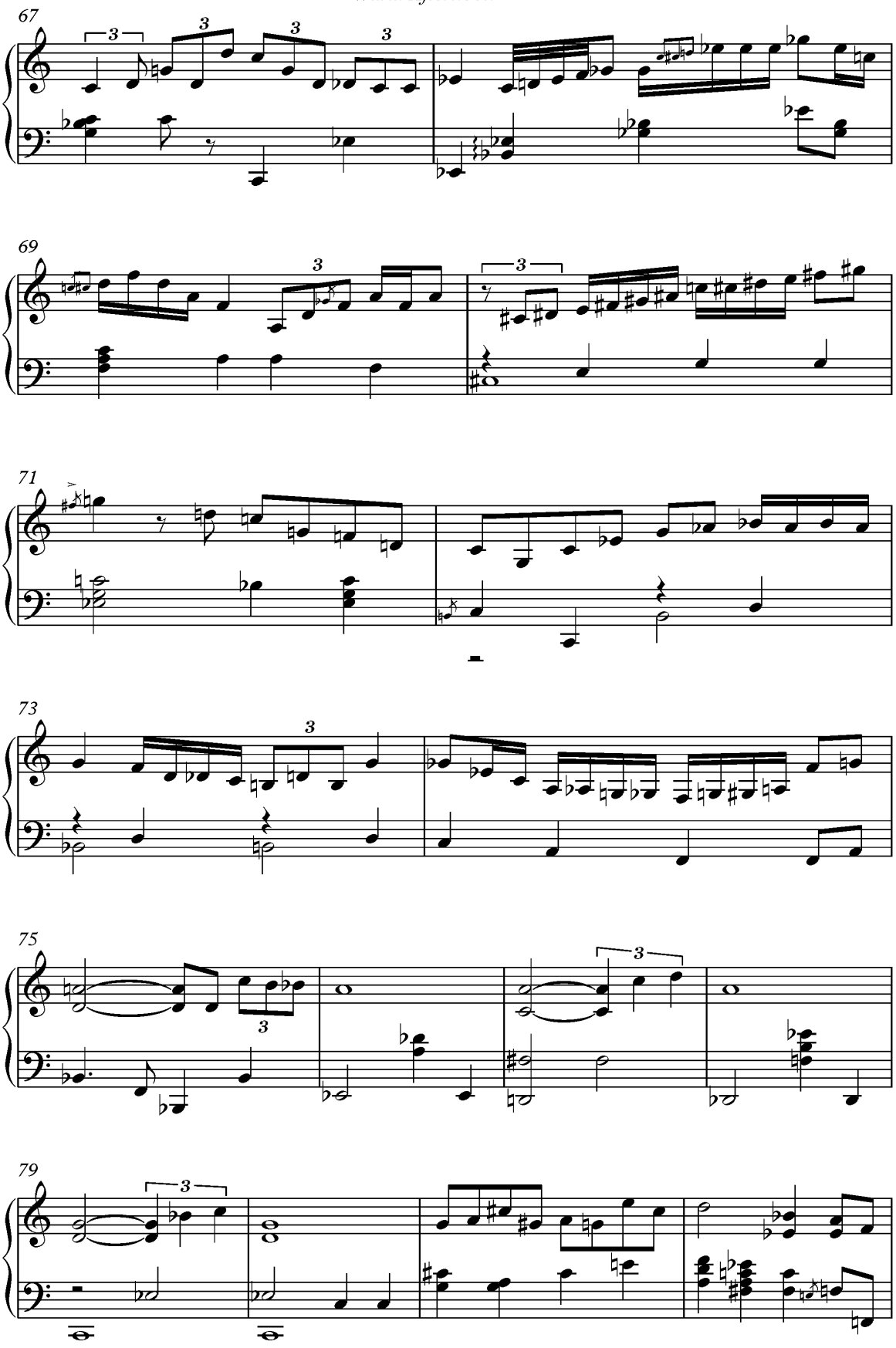
*Warm Afternoon*

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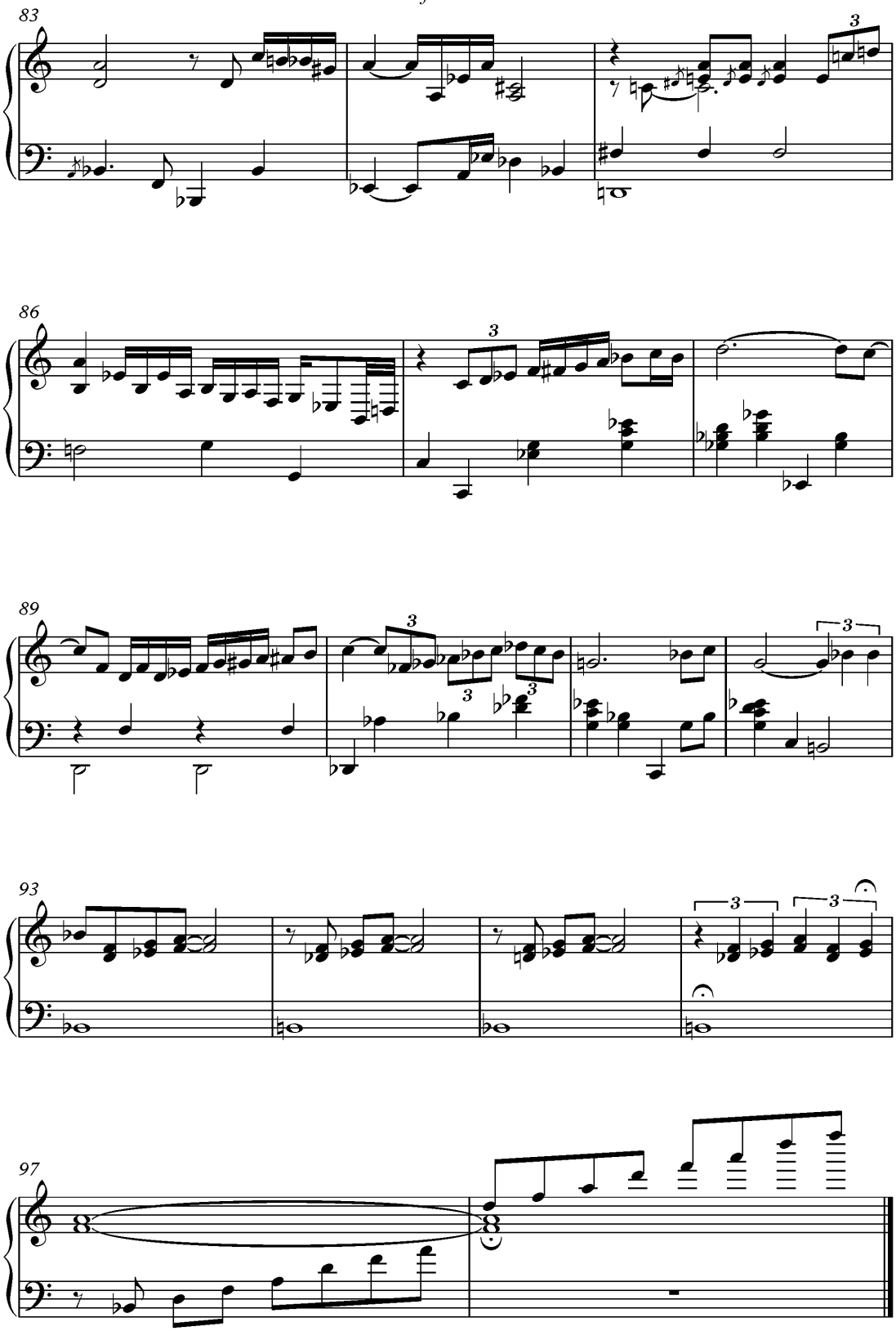
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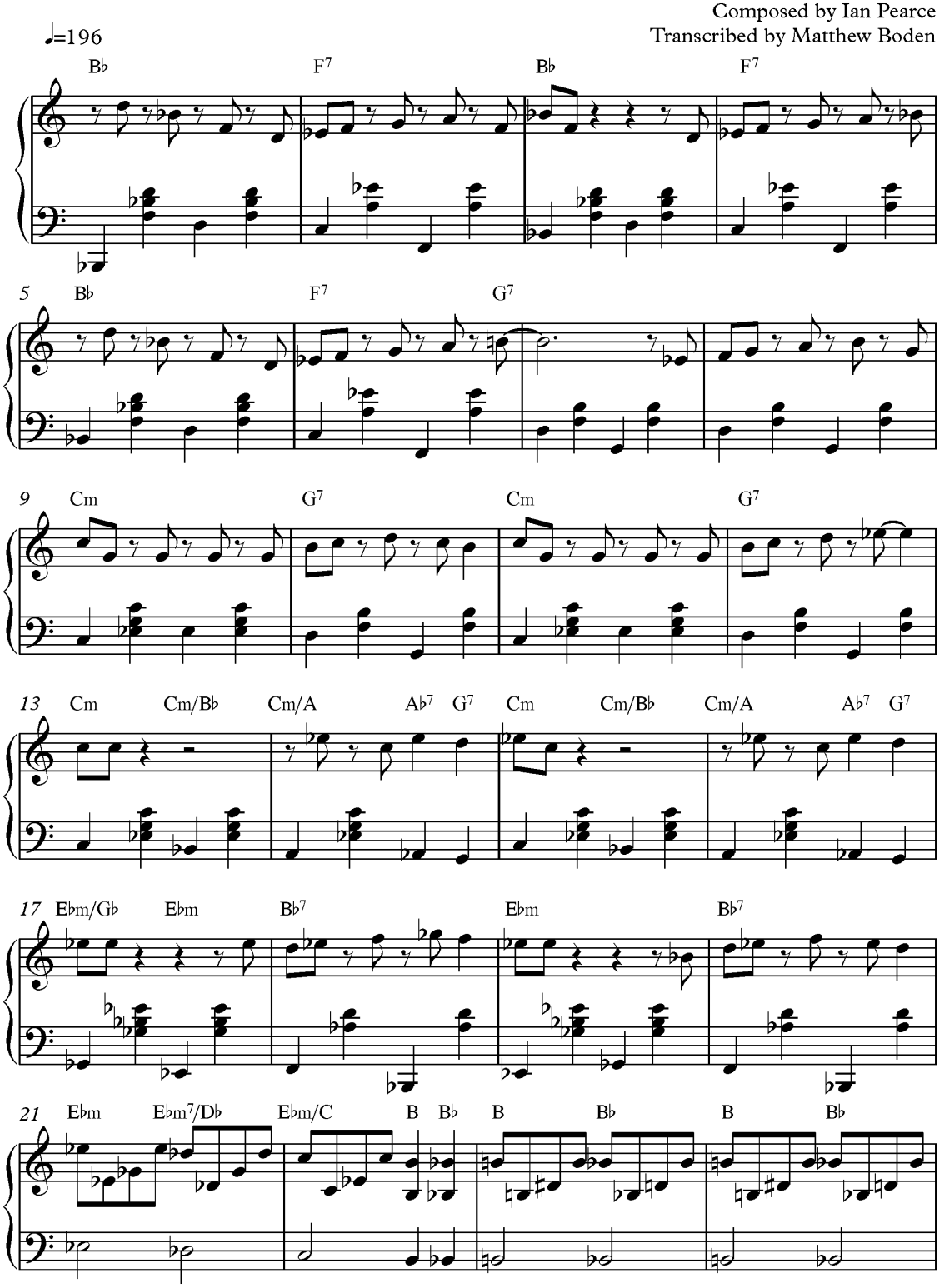
# Whatnot

(Ian Pearce on *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III - Ian Pearce*, Track 5)

Composed by Ian Pearce
Transcribed by Matthew Boden



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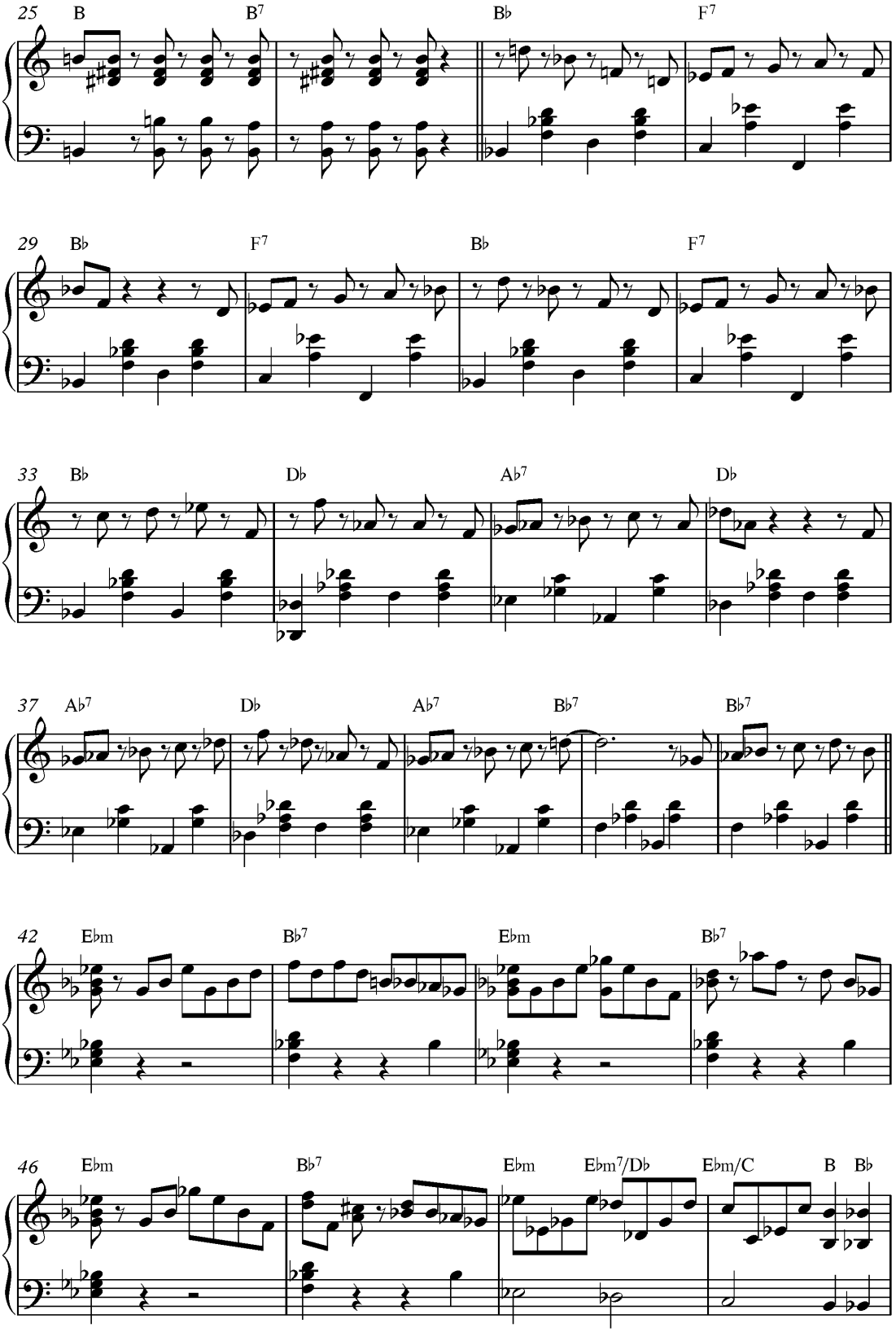
*Whatnot*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B
B7
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F7
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F7
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F7
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B♭
D♭
A♭7
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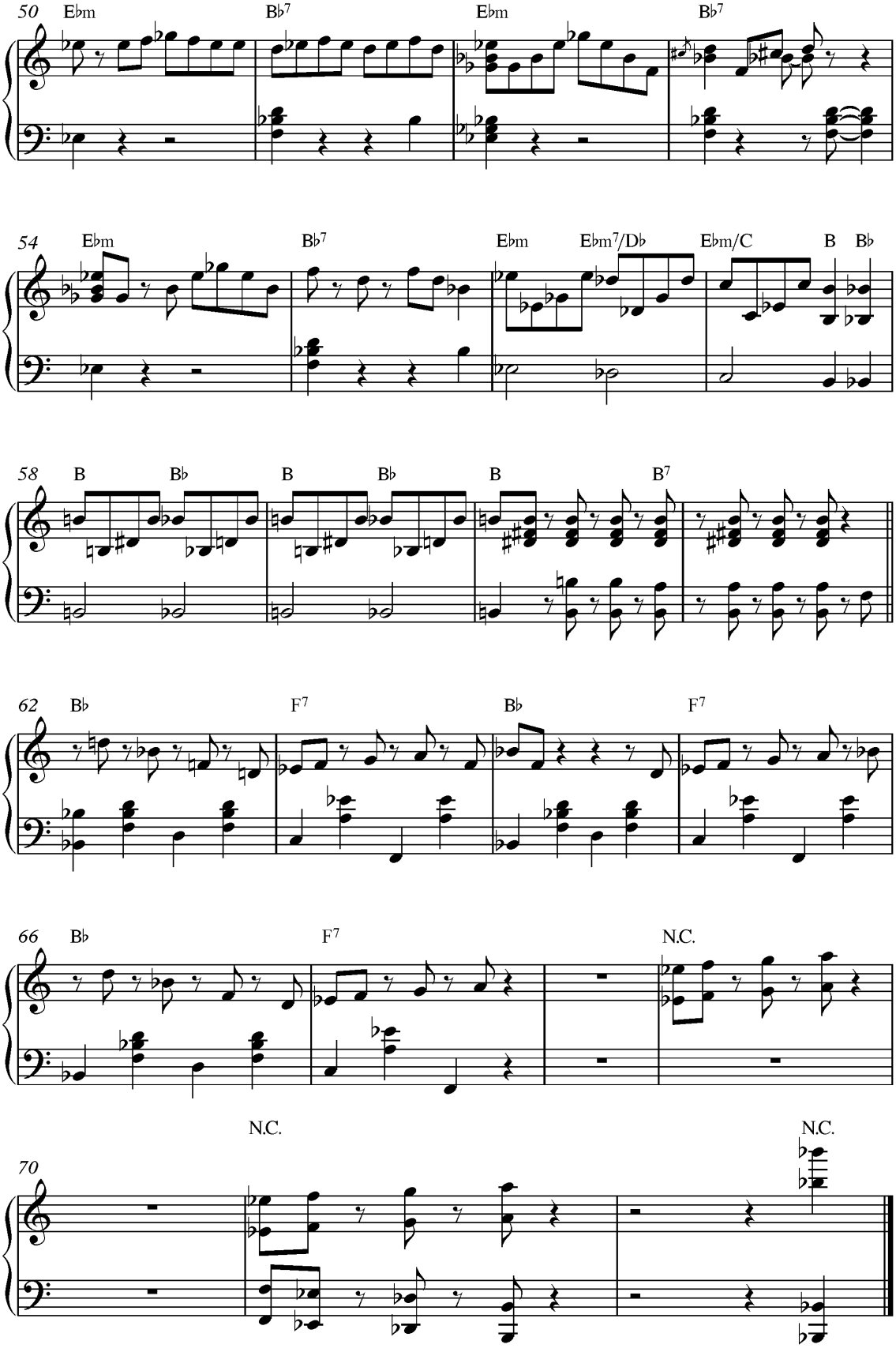
37
A♭7
D♭
A♭7
B♭7
B♭7
42
E♭m
B♭7
E♭m
B♭7
46
E♭m
B♭7
E♭m
E♭m7/D♭
E♭m/C
B
B♭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E♭m
B♭7
E♭m
B♭7
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E♭m
B♭7
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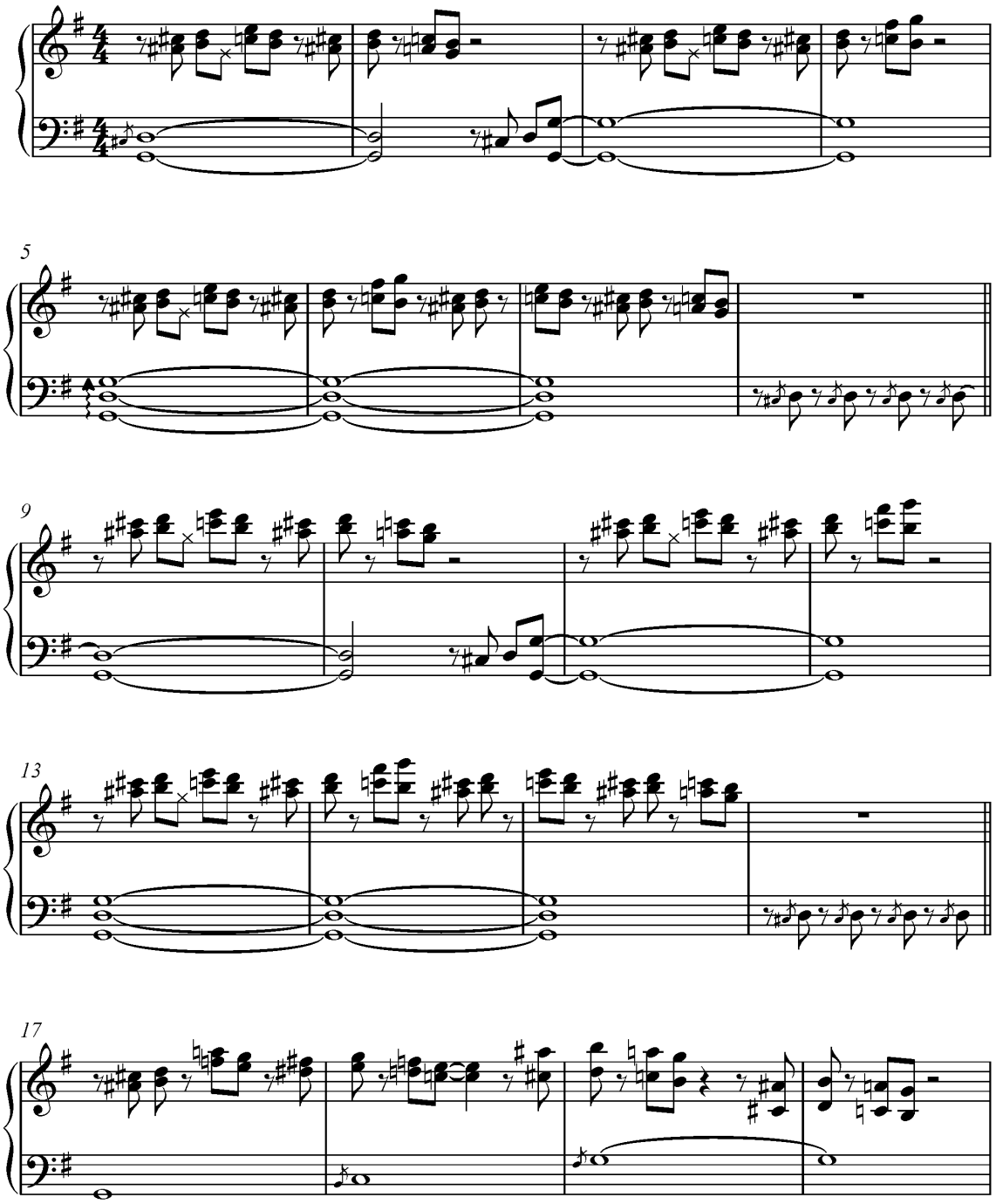
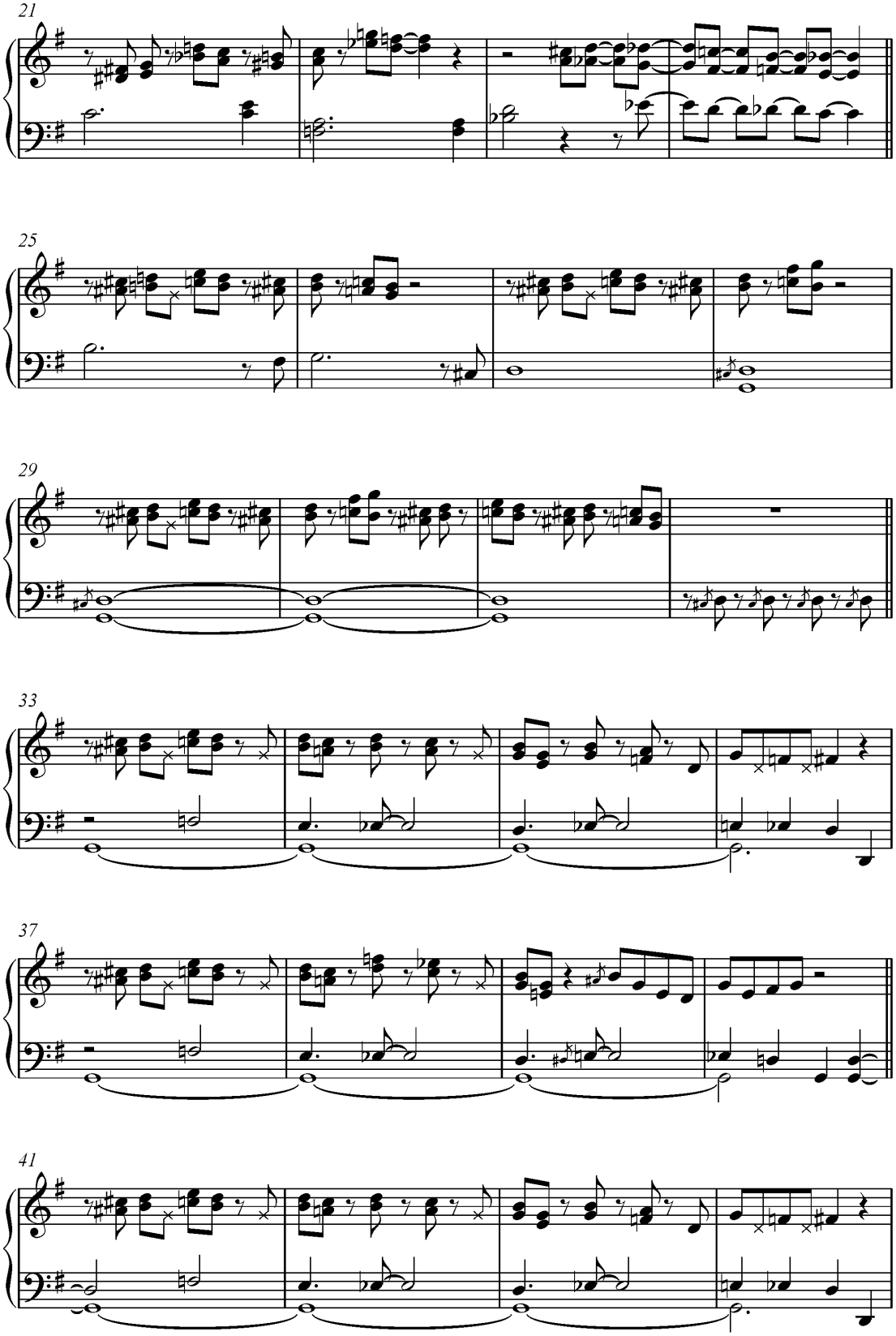
E♭m7/D♭
E♭m/C
B
B♭
58
B
B♭
B
B♭
B
B7
62
B♭
F7
B♭
F7
66
B♭
F7
N.C.
N.C.
N.C.
70

# A Little Something

(Ian Pearce on *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III - Ian Pearce*, Track 7)

Composed by Ian Pearce
Transcribed by Matthew Boden

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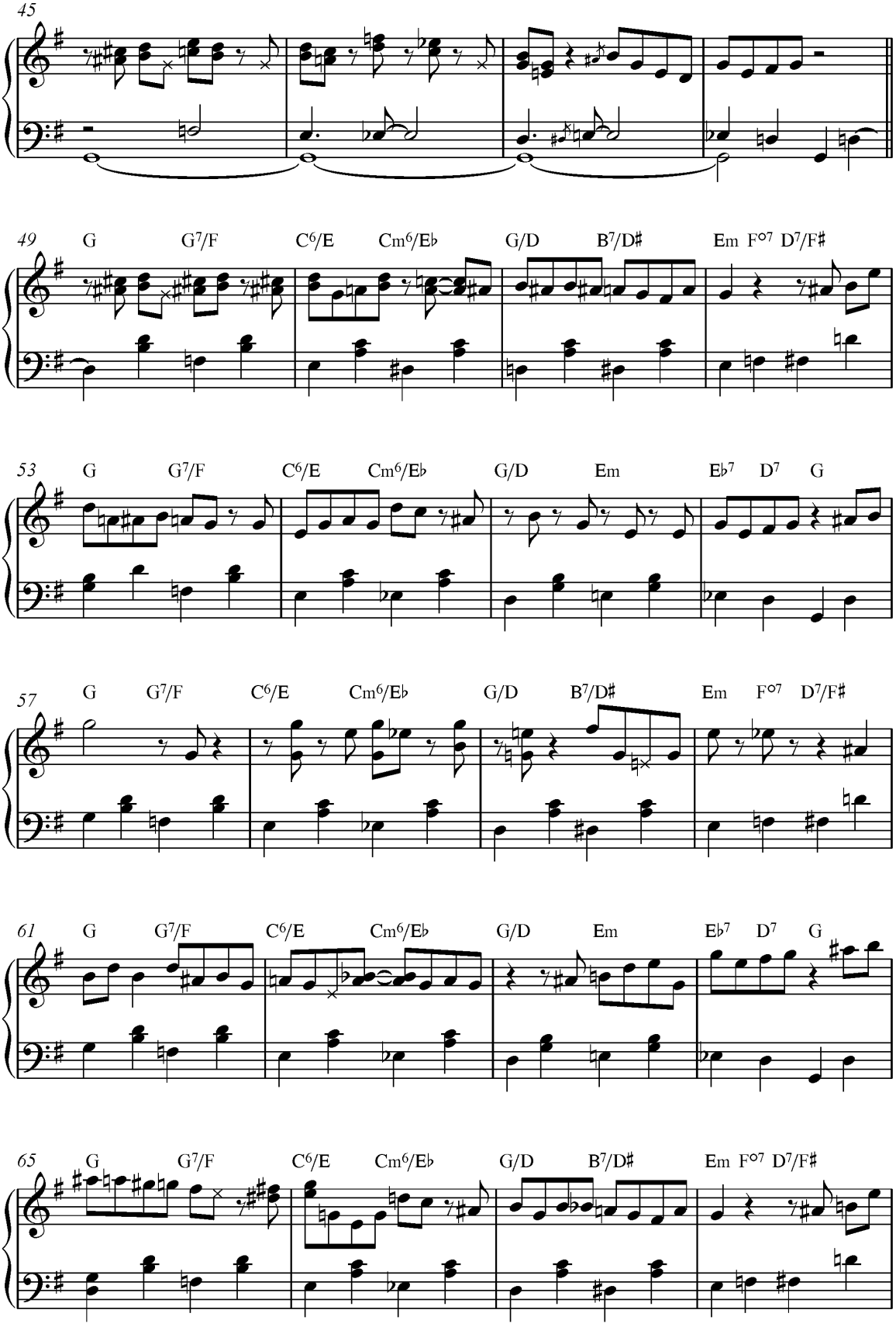
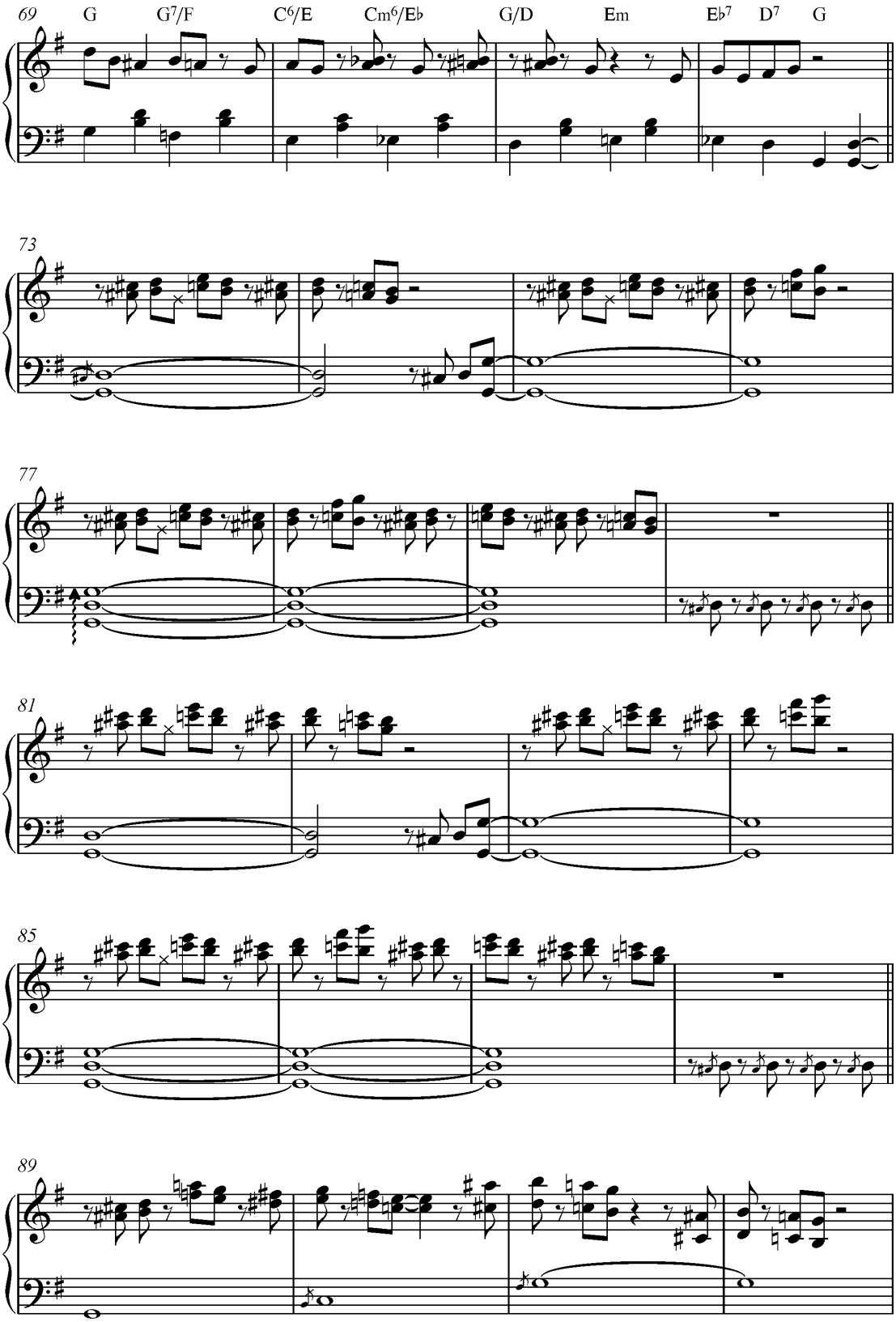

45
49 G G7/F C6/E Cm6/Eb G/D B7/D# Em F°7 D7/F#
53 G G7/F C6/E Cm6/Eb G/D Em Eb7 D7 G
57 G G7/F C6/E Cm6/Eb G/D B7/D# Em F°7 D7/F#
61 G G7/F C6/E Cm6/Eb G/D Em Eb7 D7 G
65 G G7/F C6/E Cm6/Eb G/D B7/D# Em F°7 D7/F#

*A Little Something*

4



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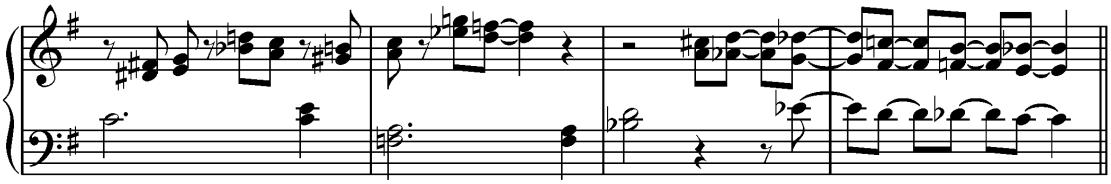

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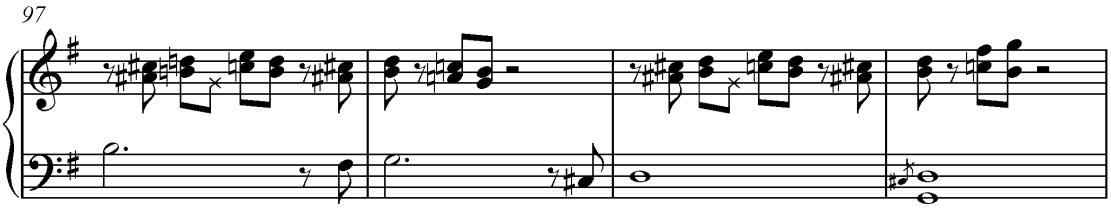

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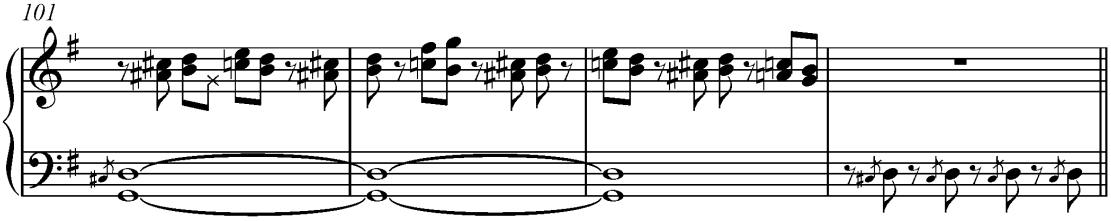

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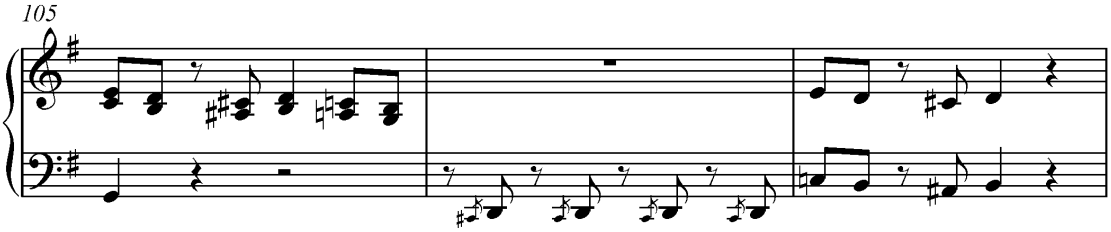

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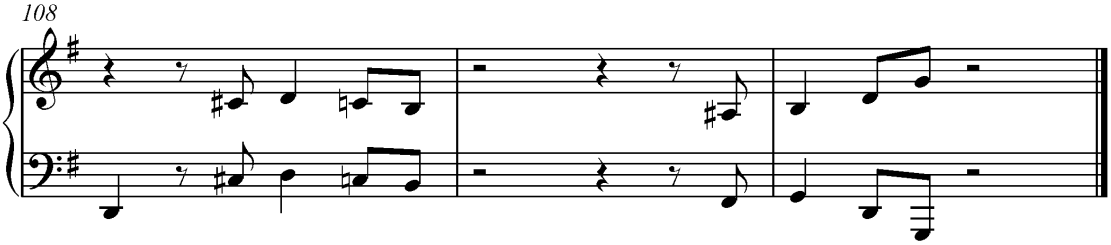
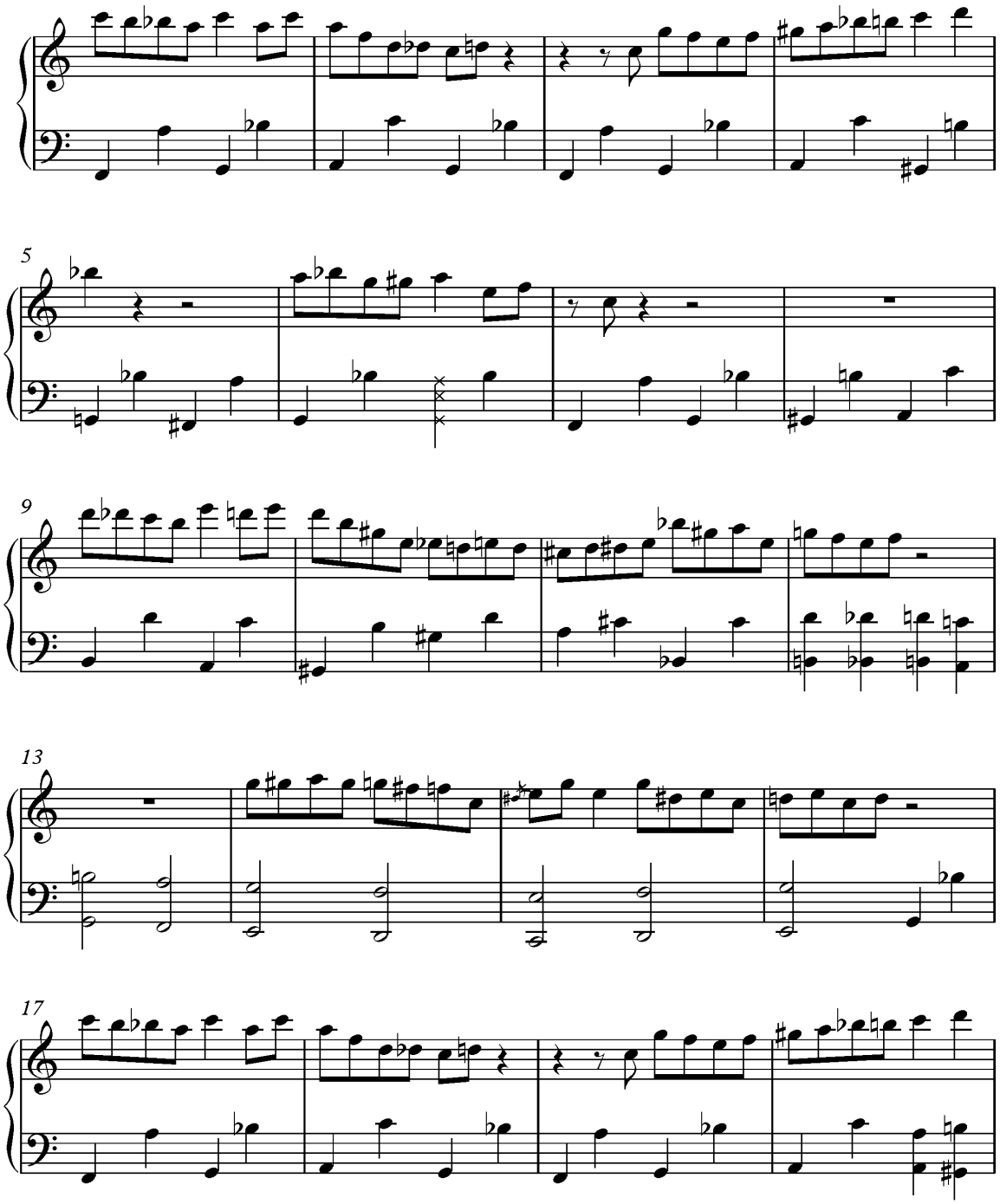


# Wilson's Idea

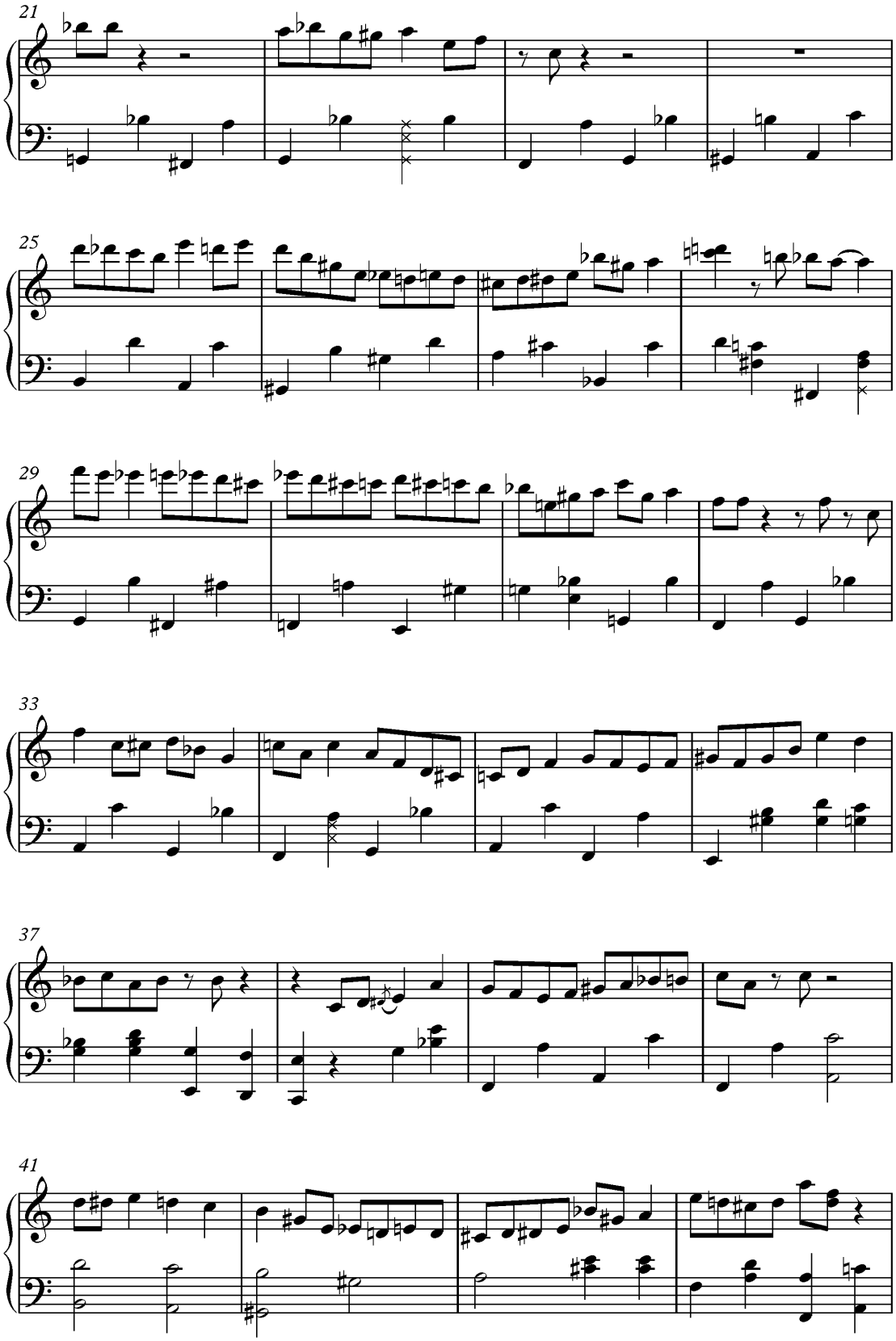
(Ian Pearce on *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III - Ian Pearce*, Track 13)

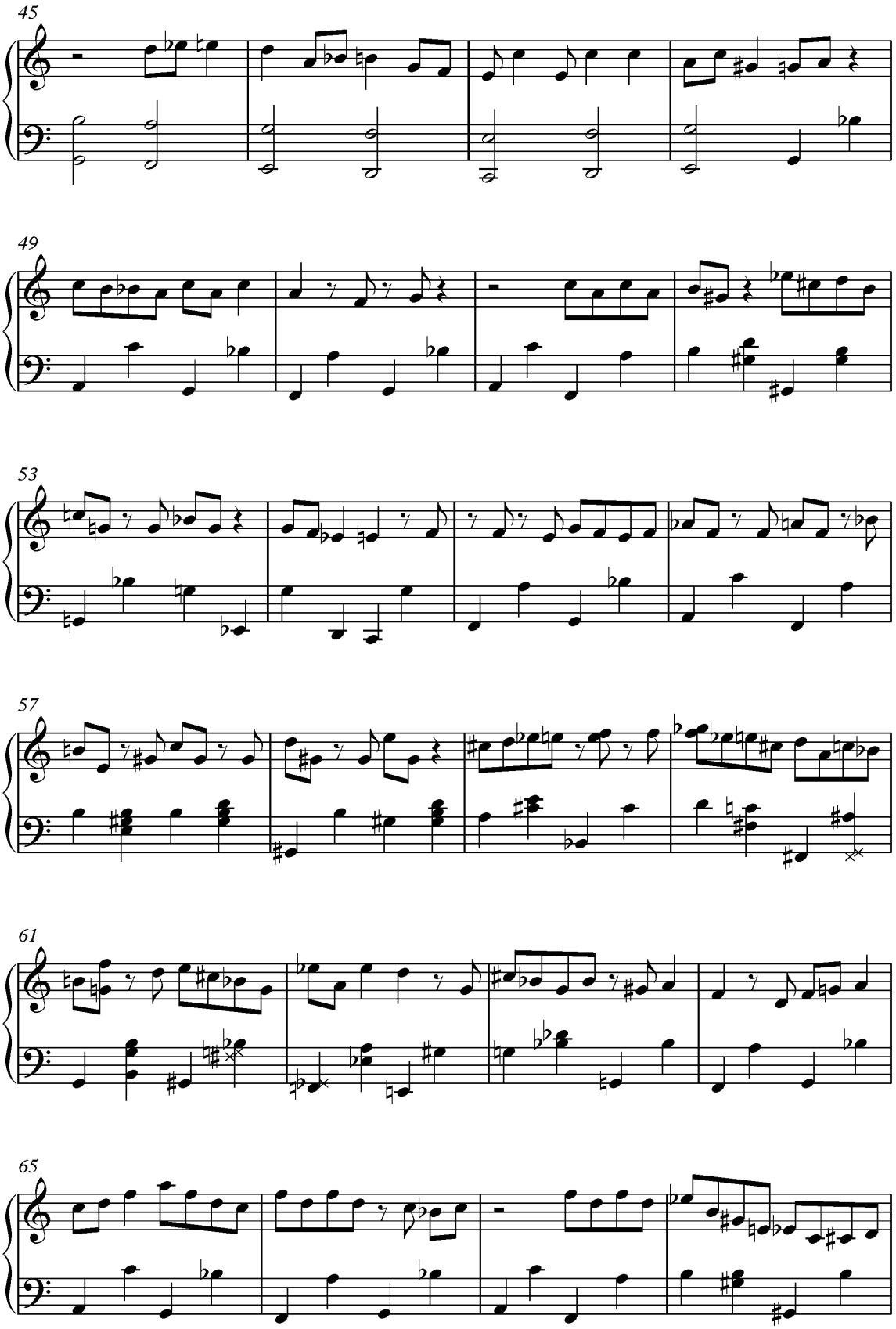
Composed by Ian Pearce
Transcribed by Matthew Boden

♩=208



*Wilson's Idea*

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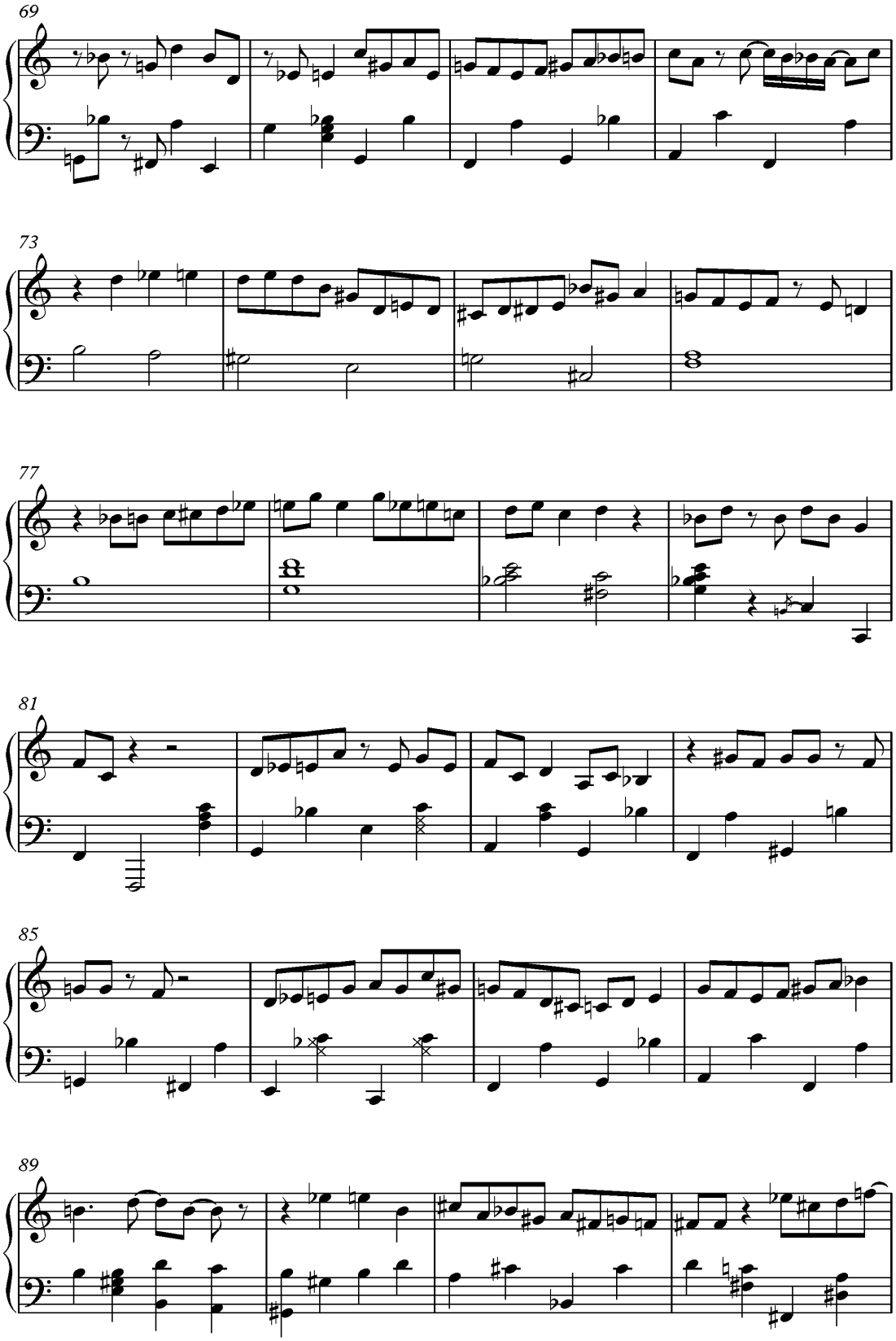
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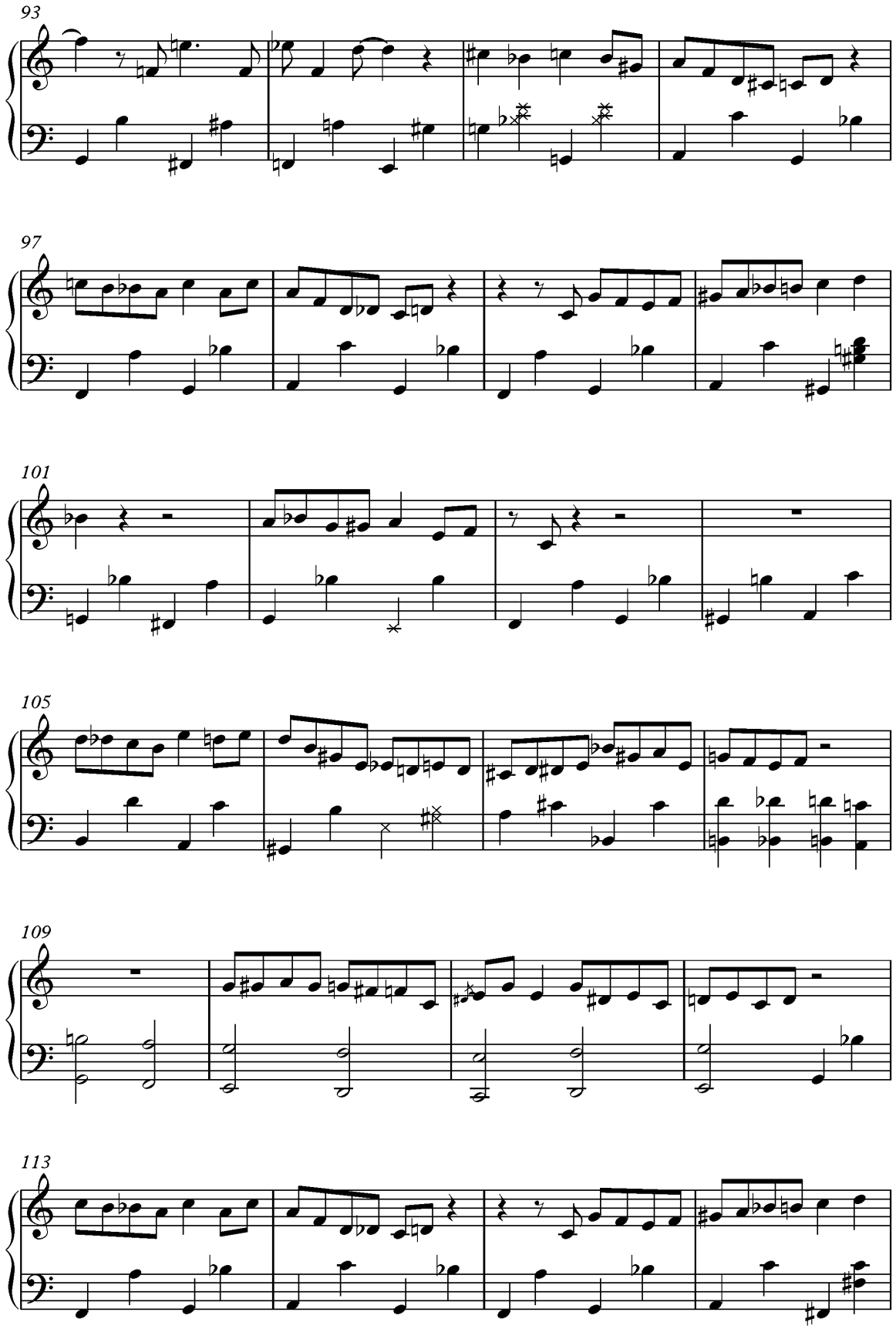
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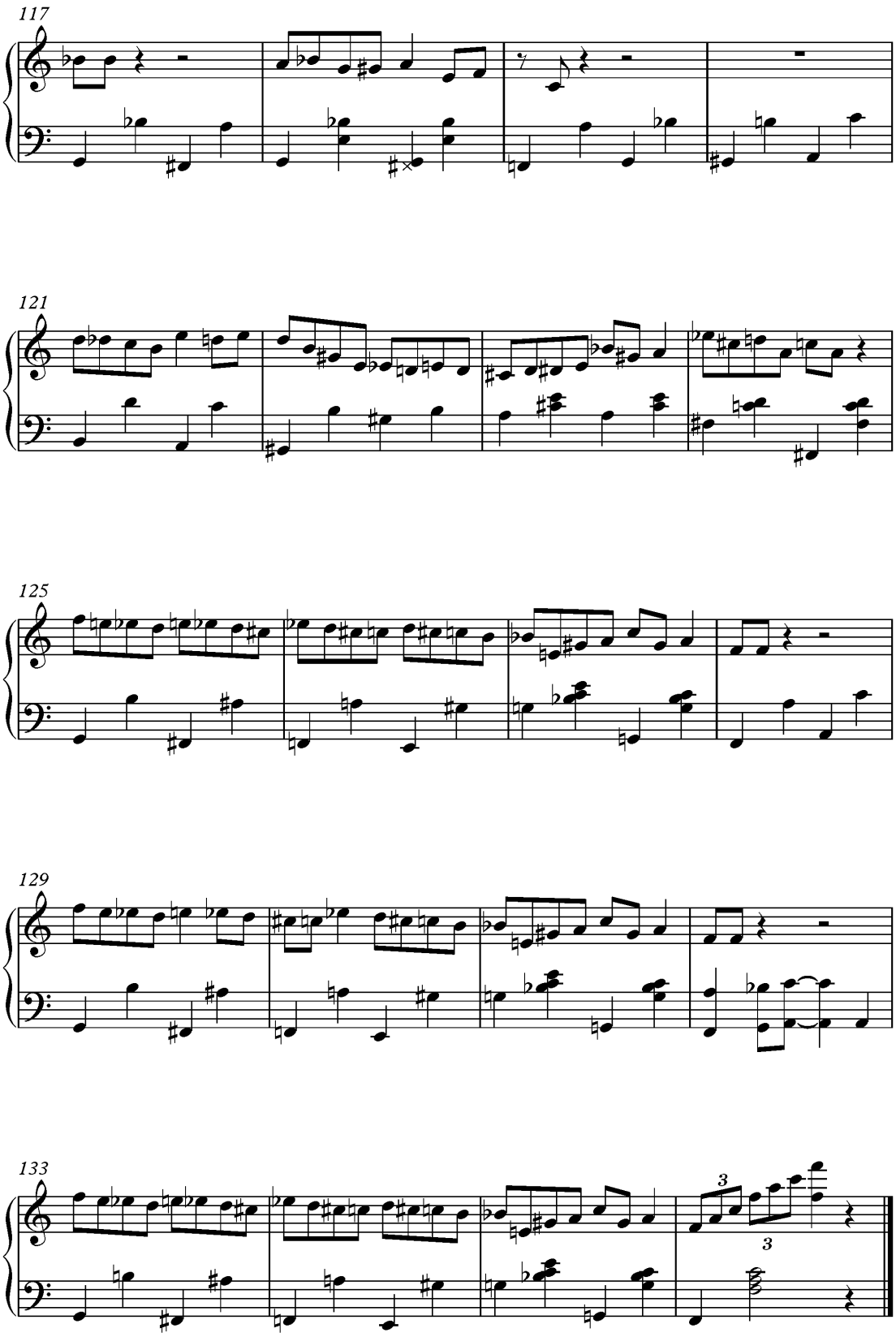
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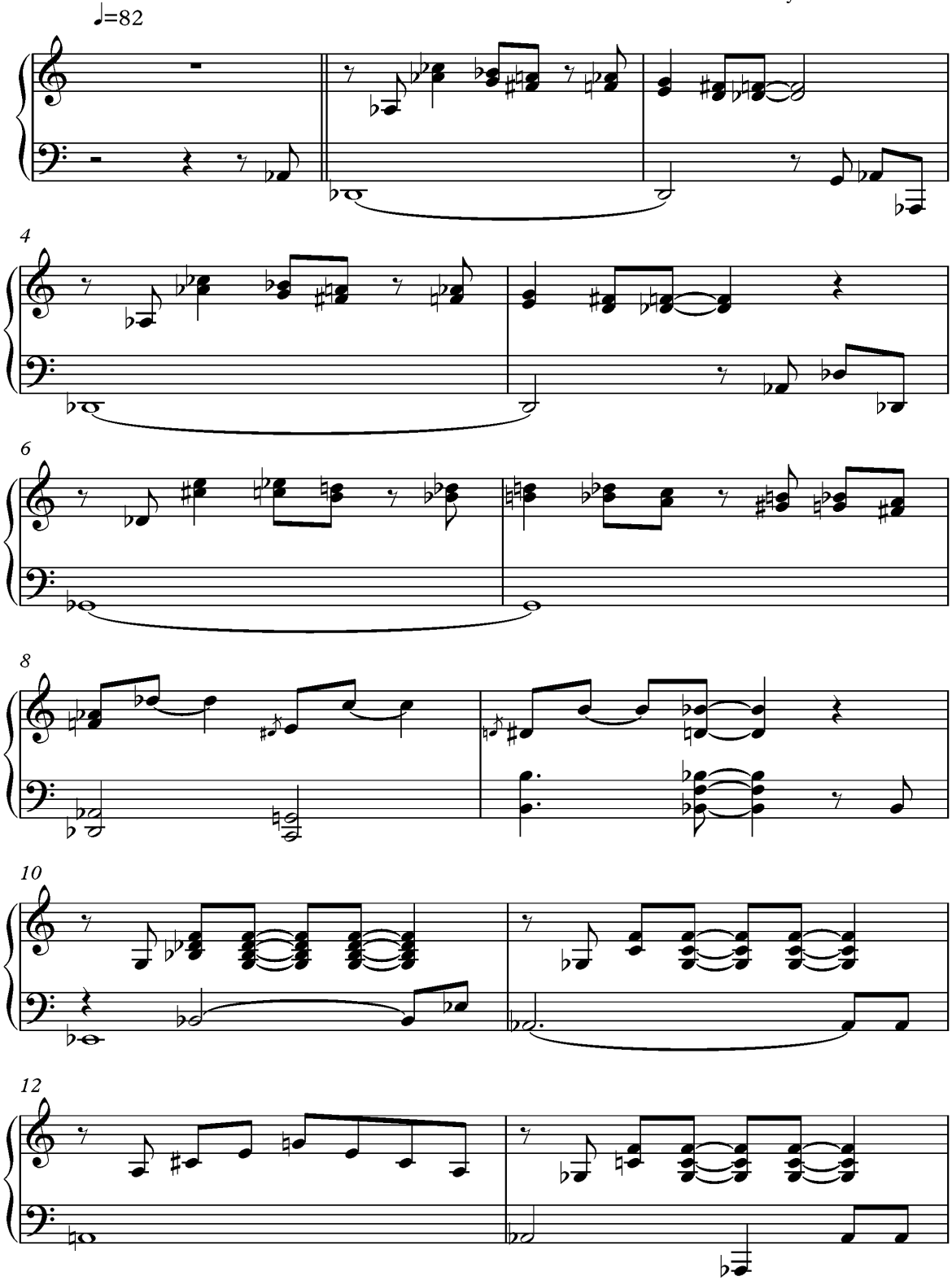
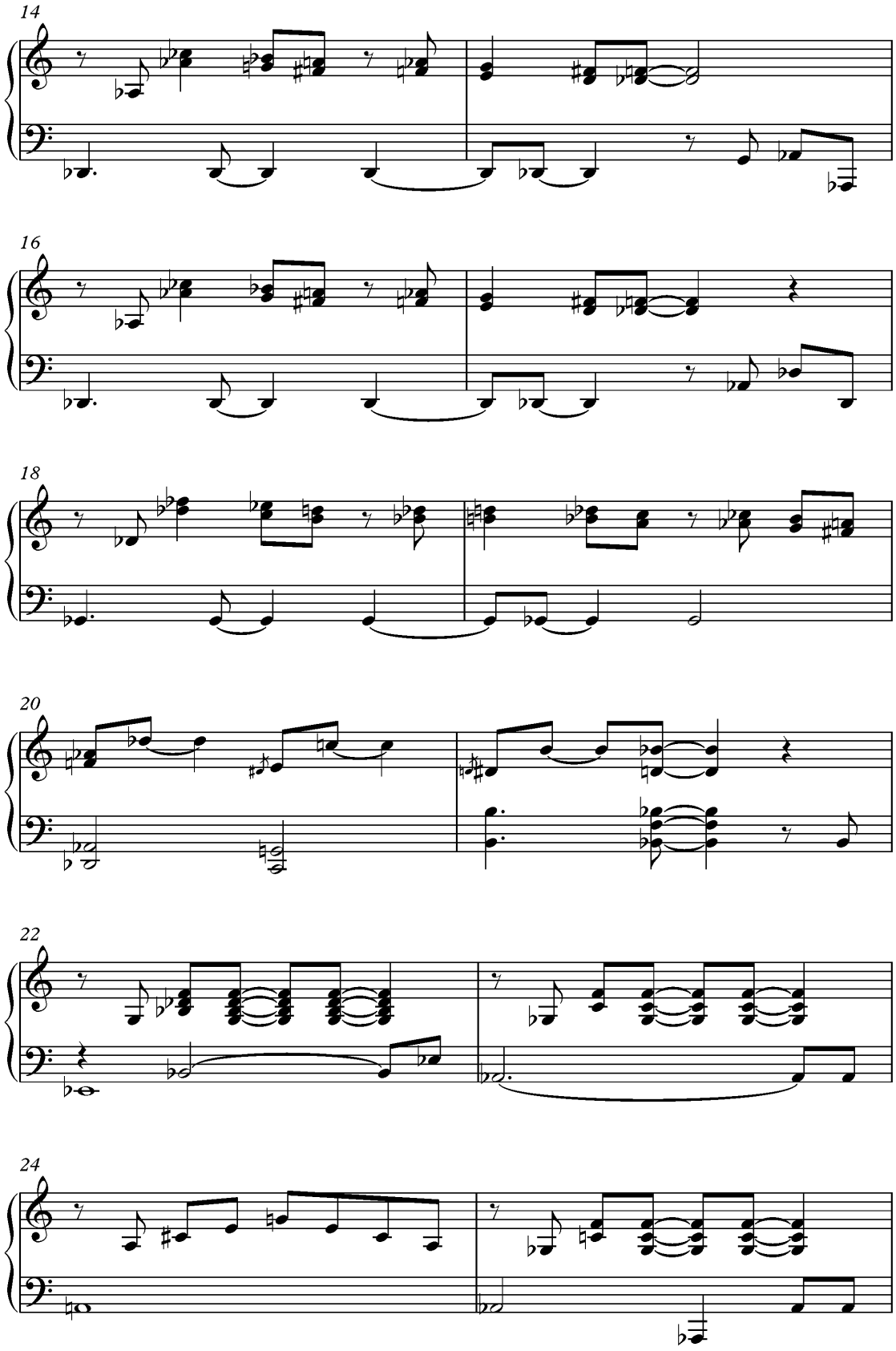
# Blue Shadows

(Ian Pearce on *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III - Ian Pearce*, Track 14)

Composed by Ian Pearce
Transcribed by Matthew Boden

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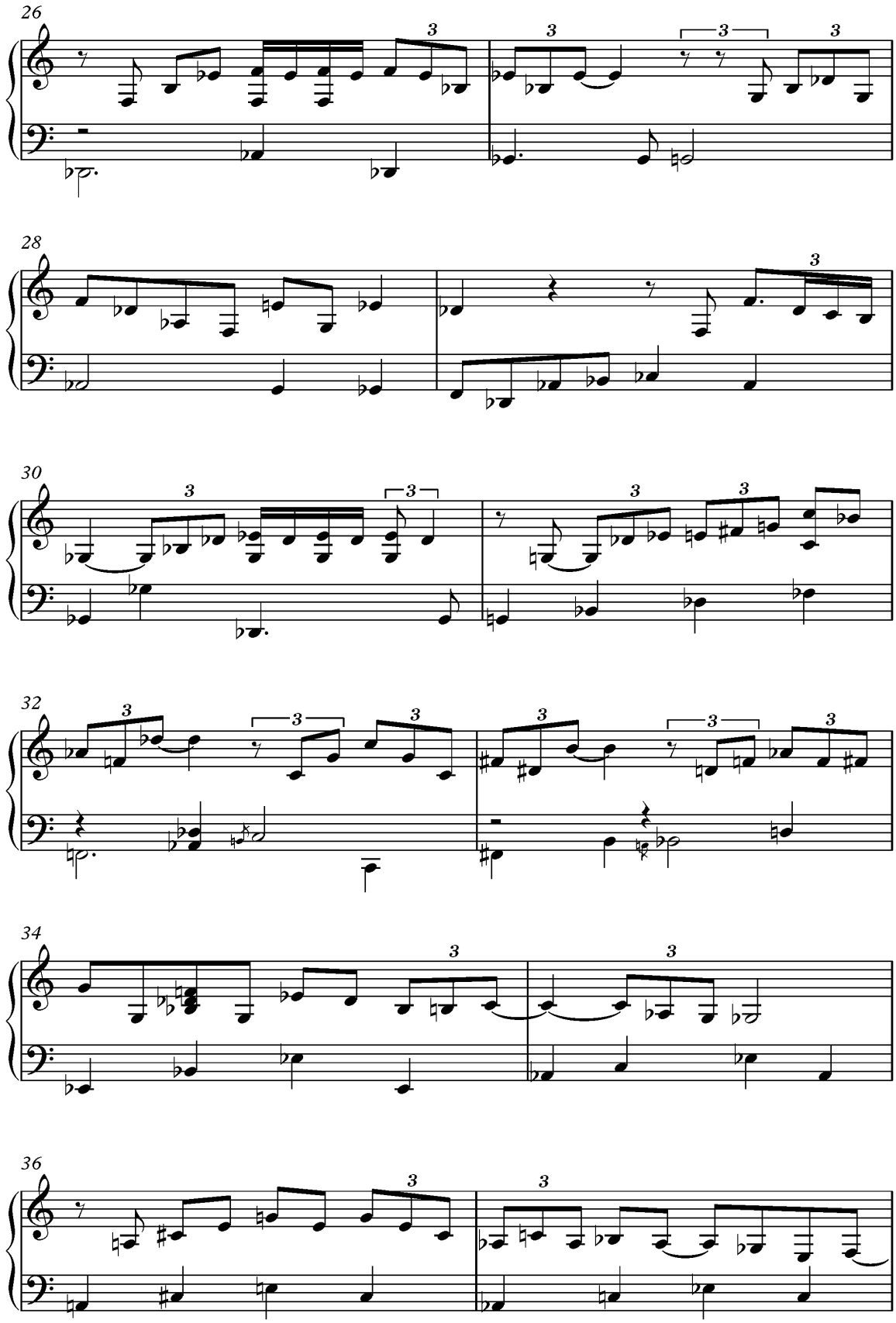
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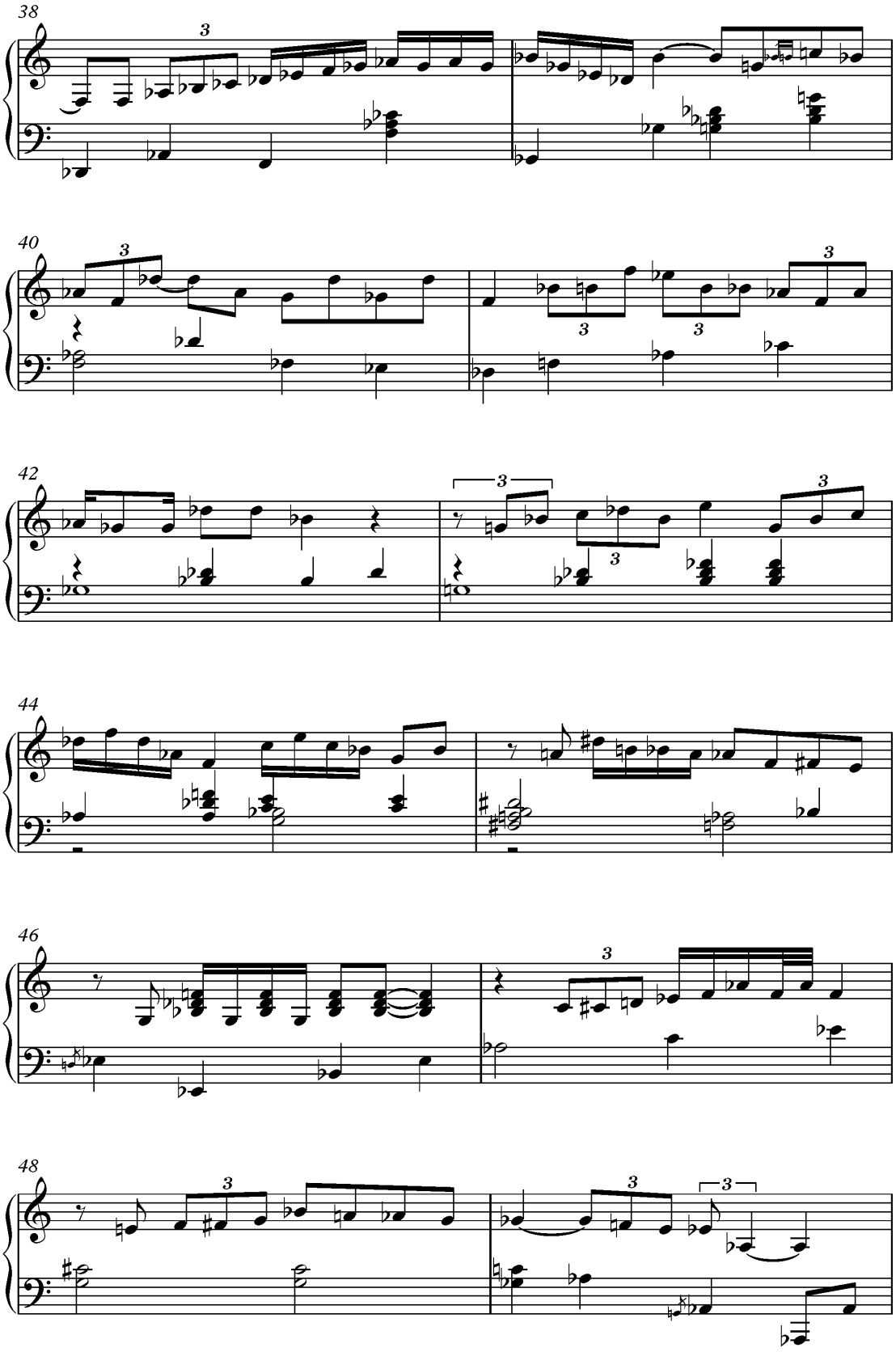
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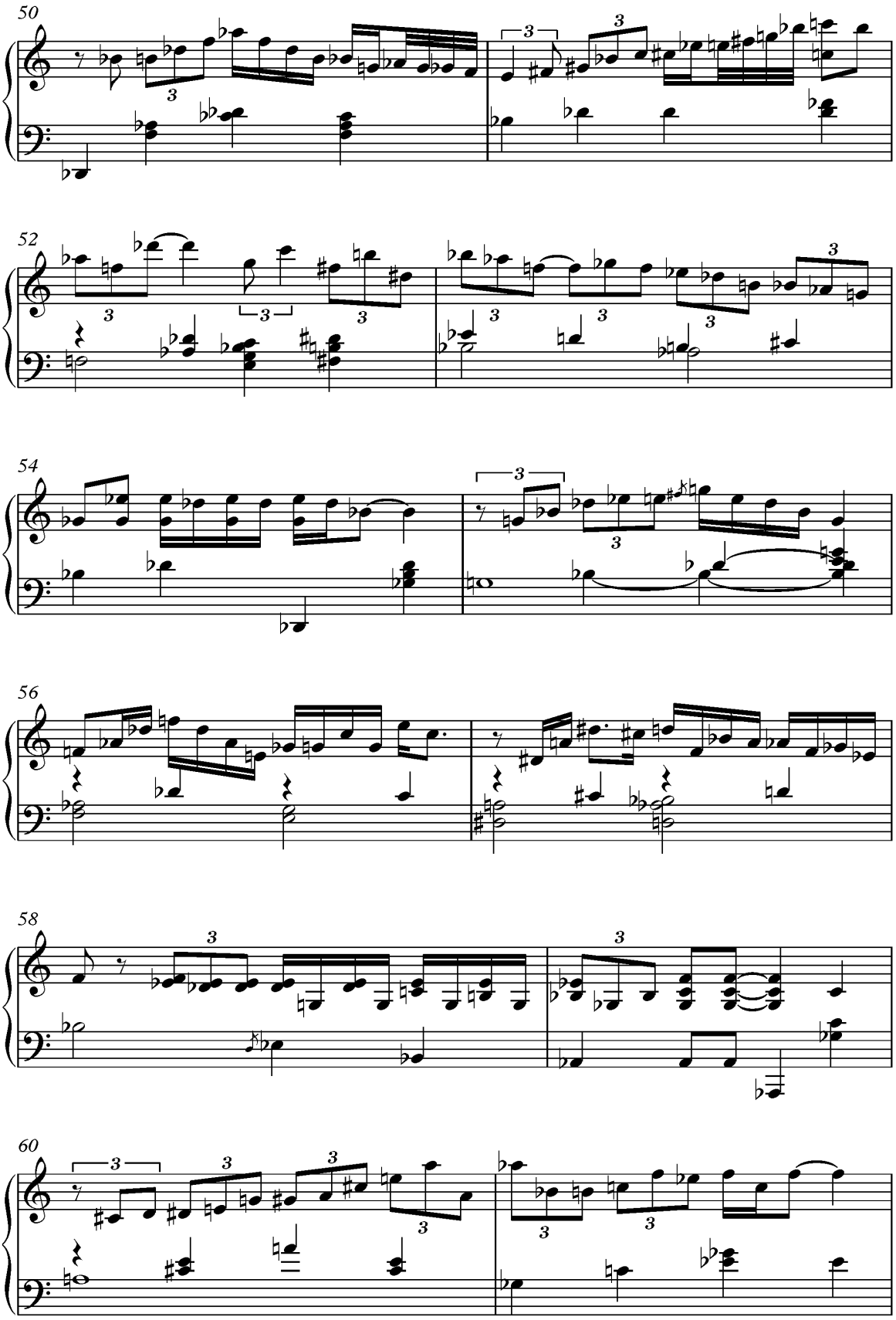
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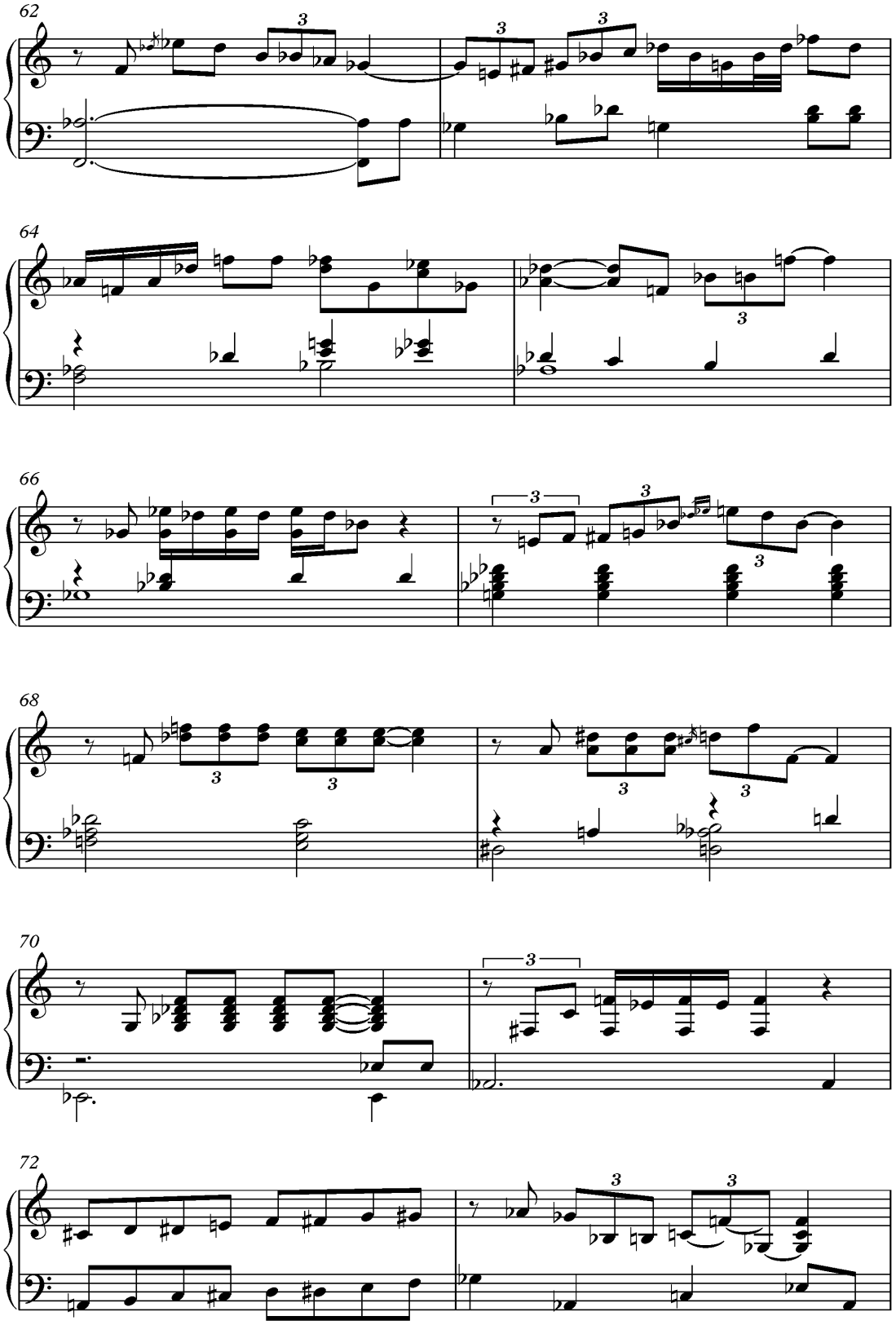
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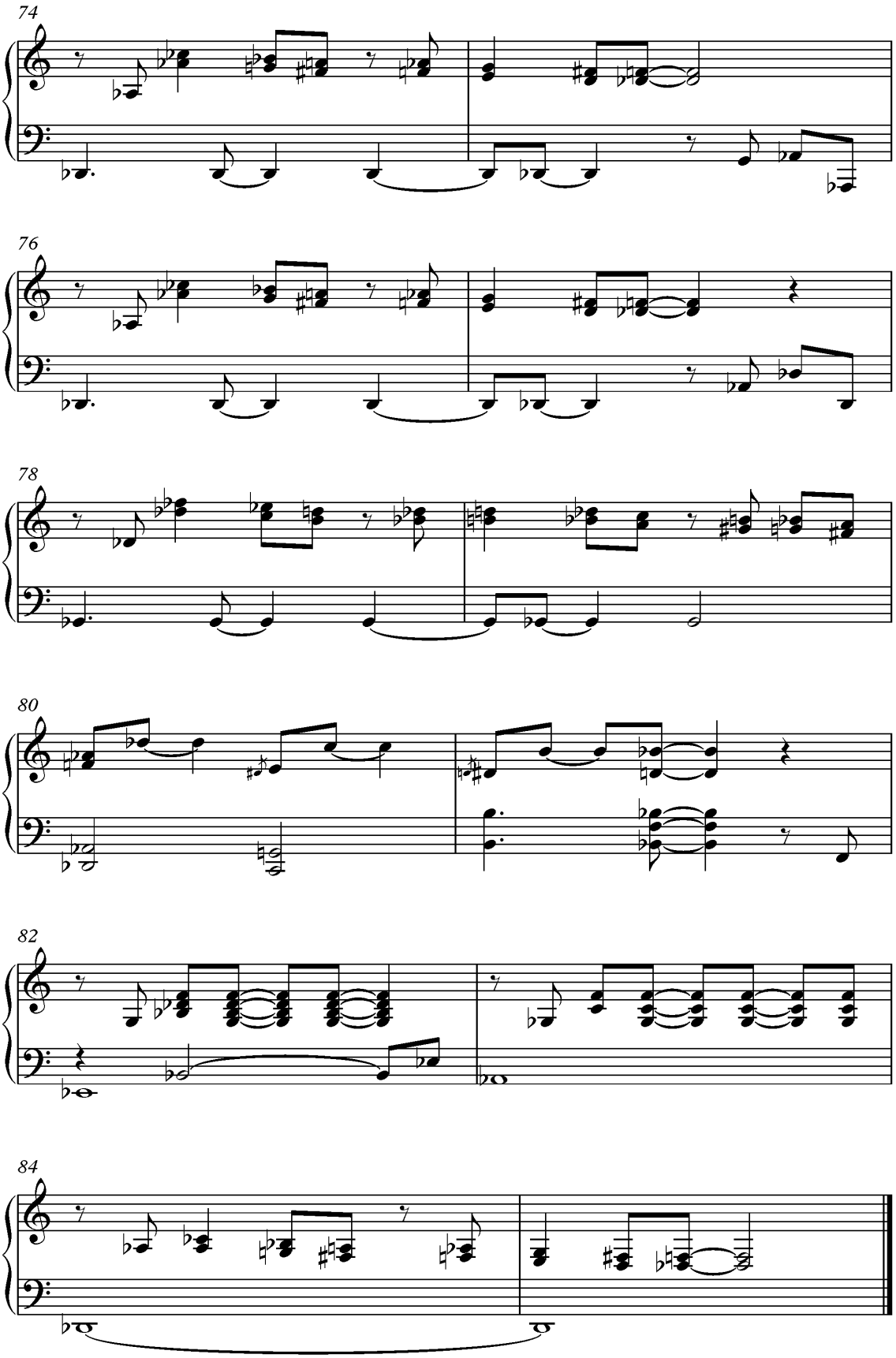
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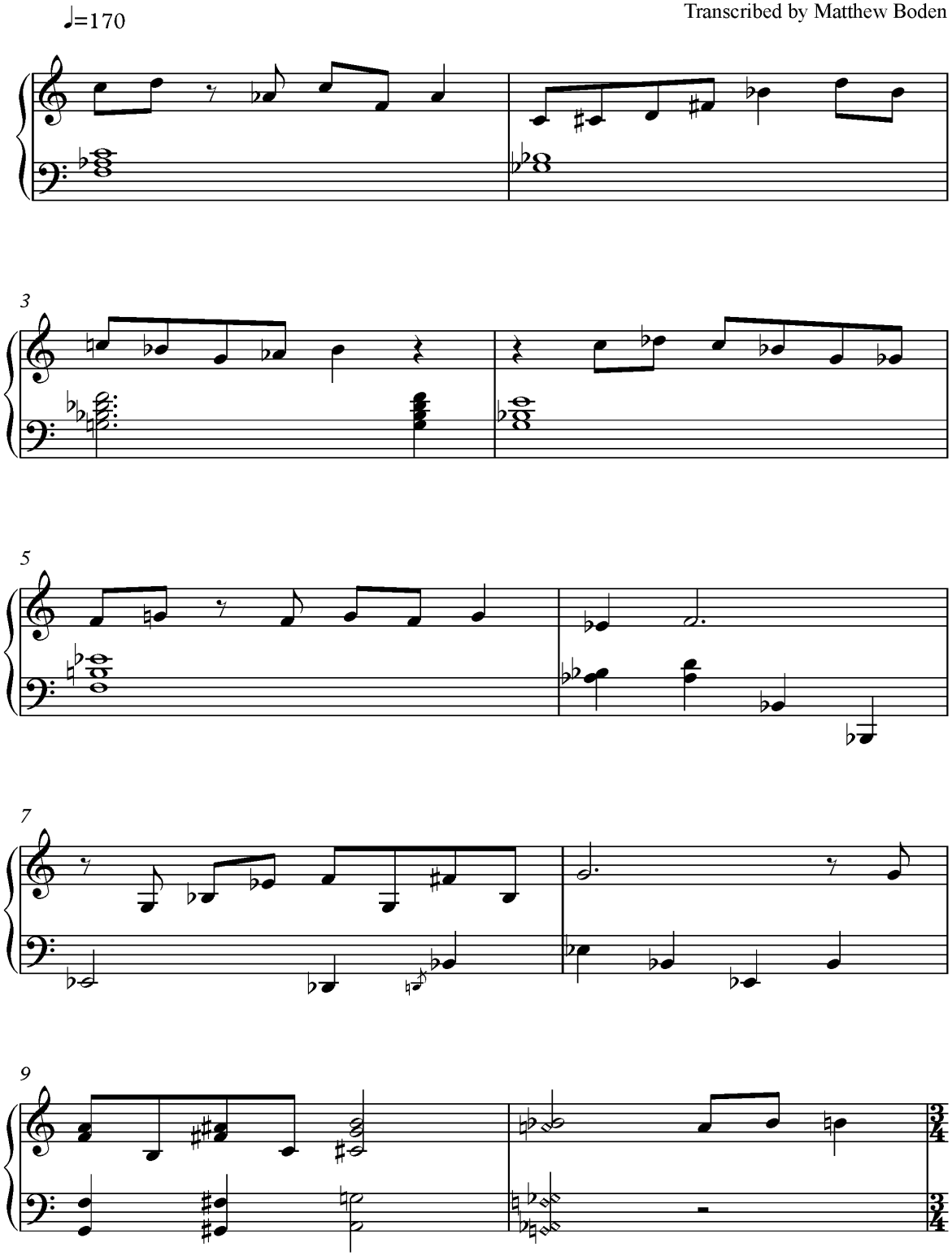
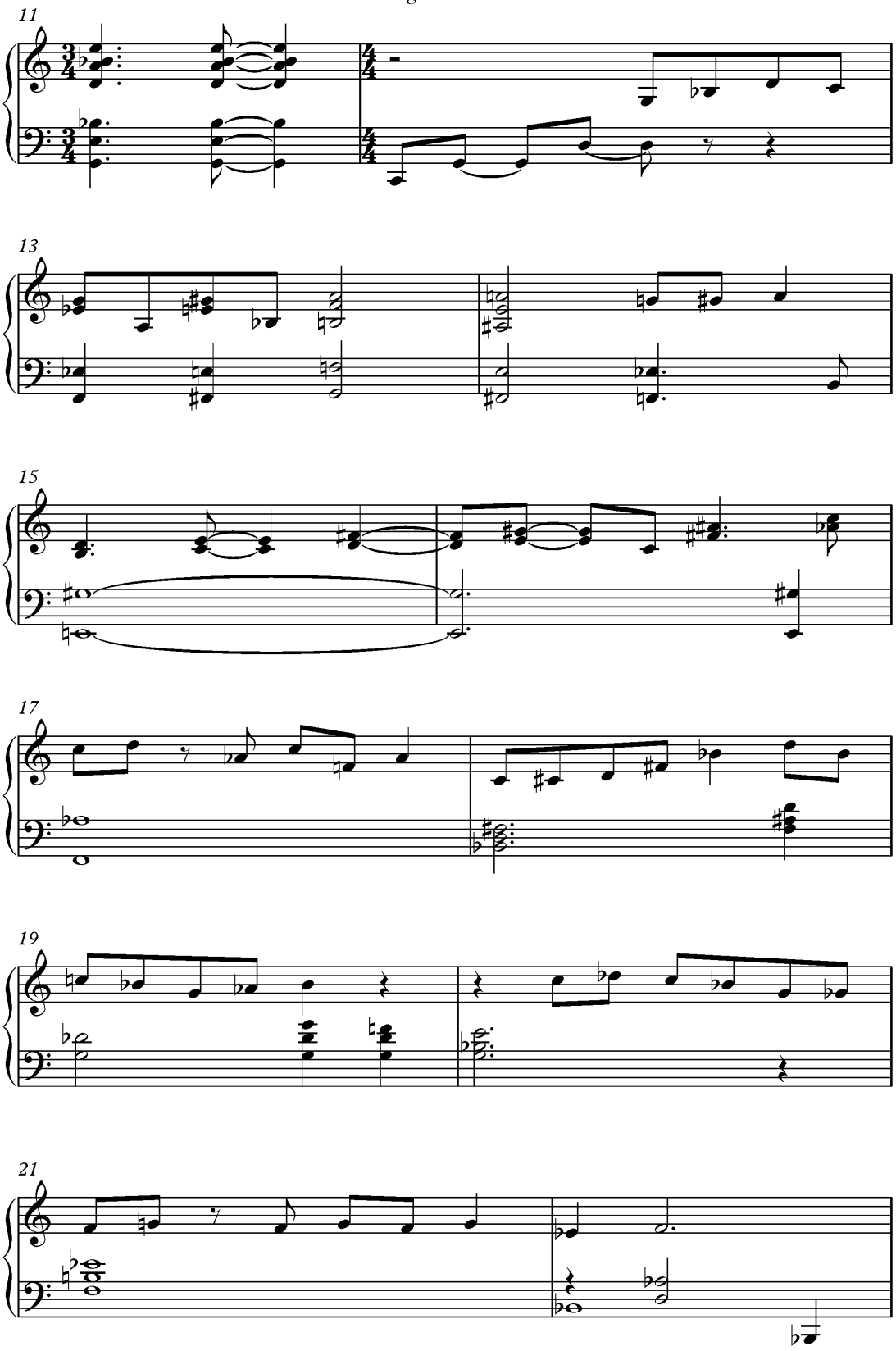
# Thinking About Bix

(Ian Pearce on *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III - Ian Pearce*, Track 16)

Composed by Ian Pearce
Transcribed by Matthew Boden

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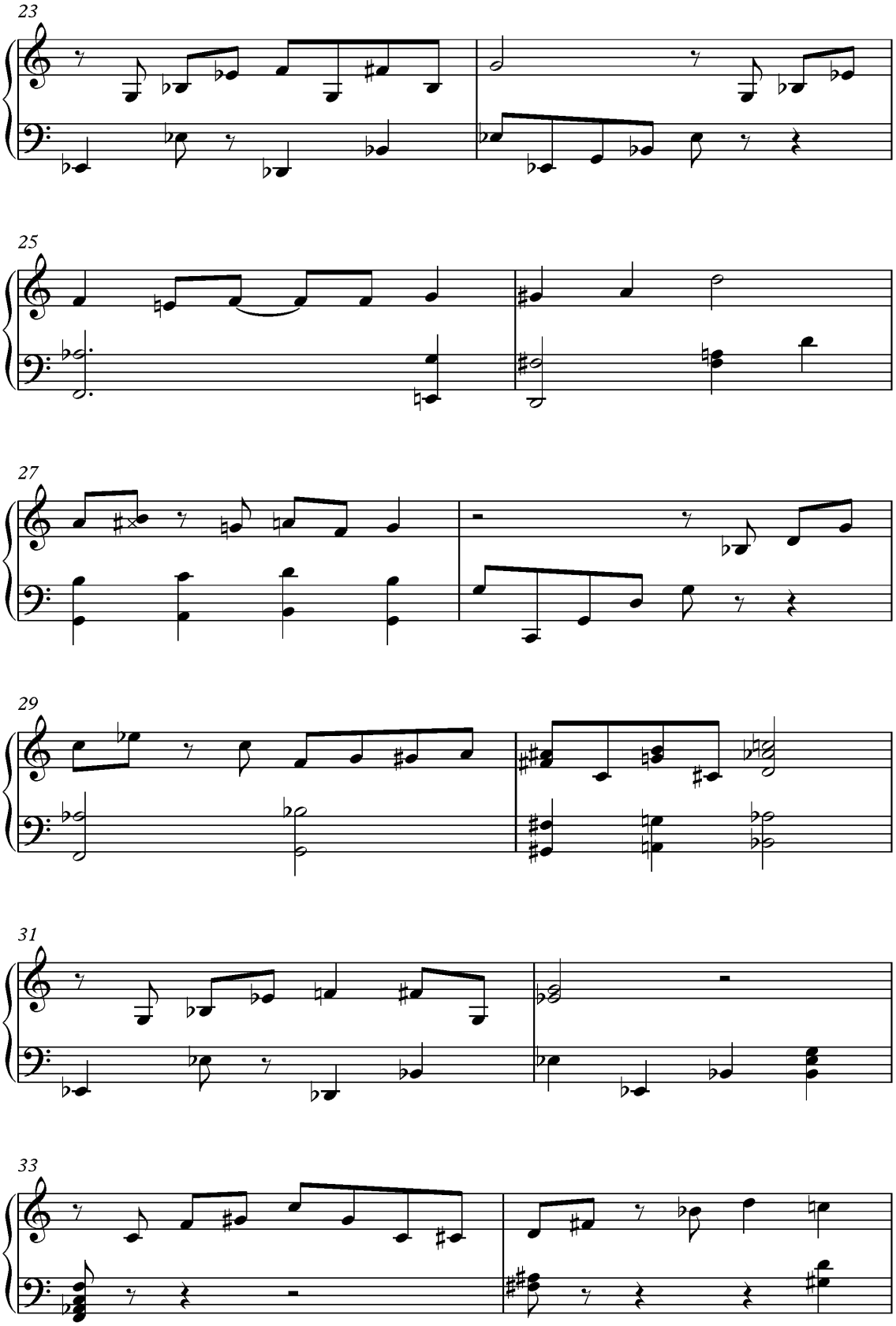
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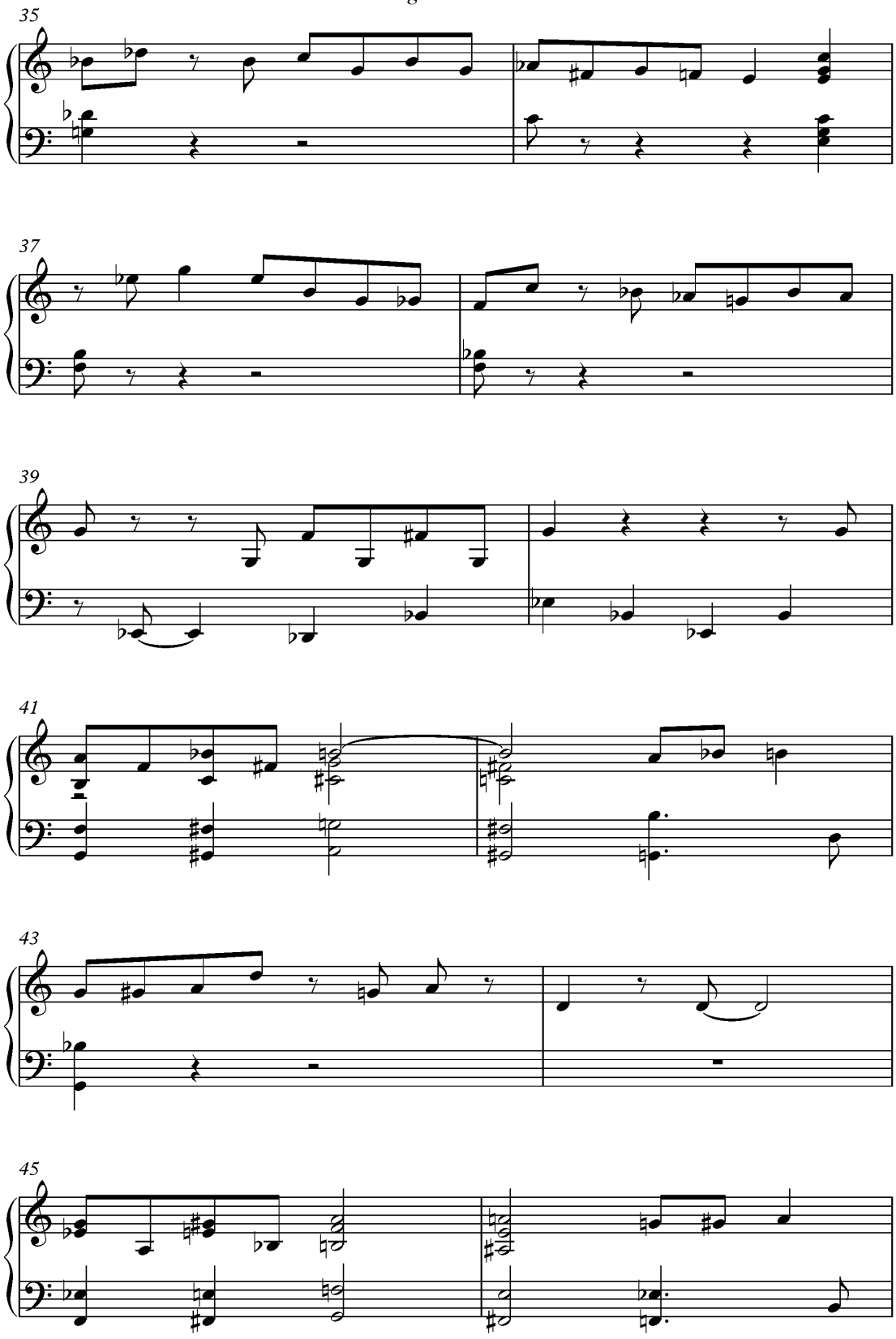
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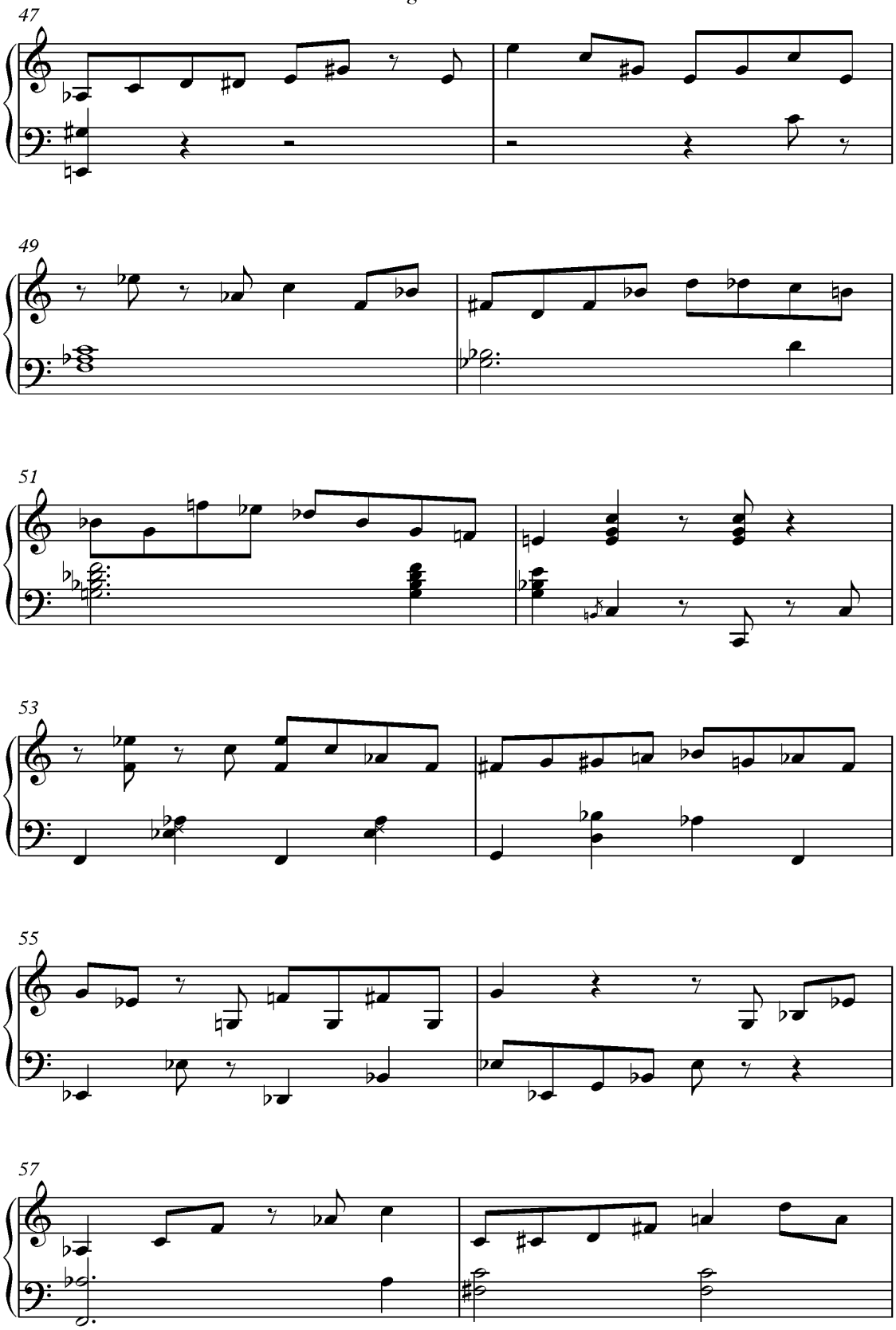
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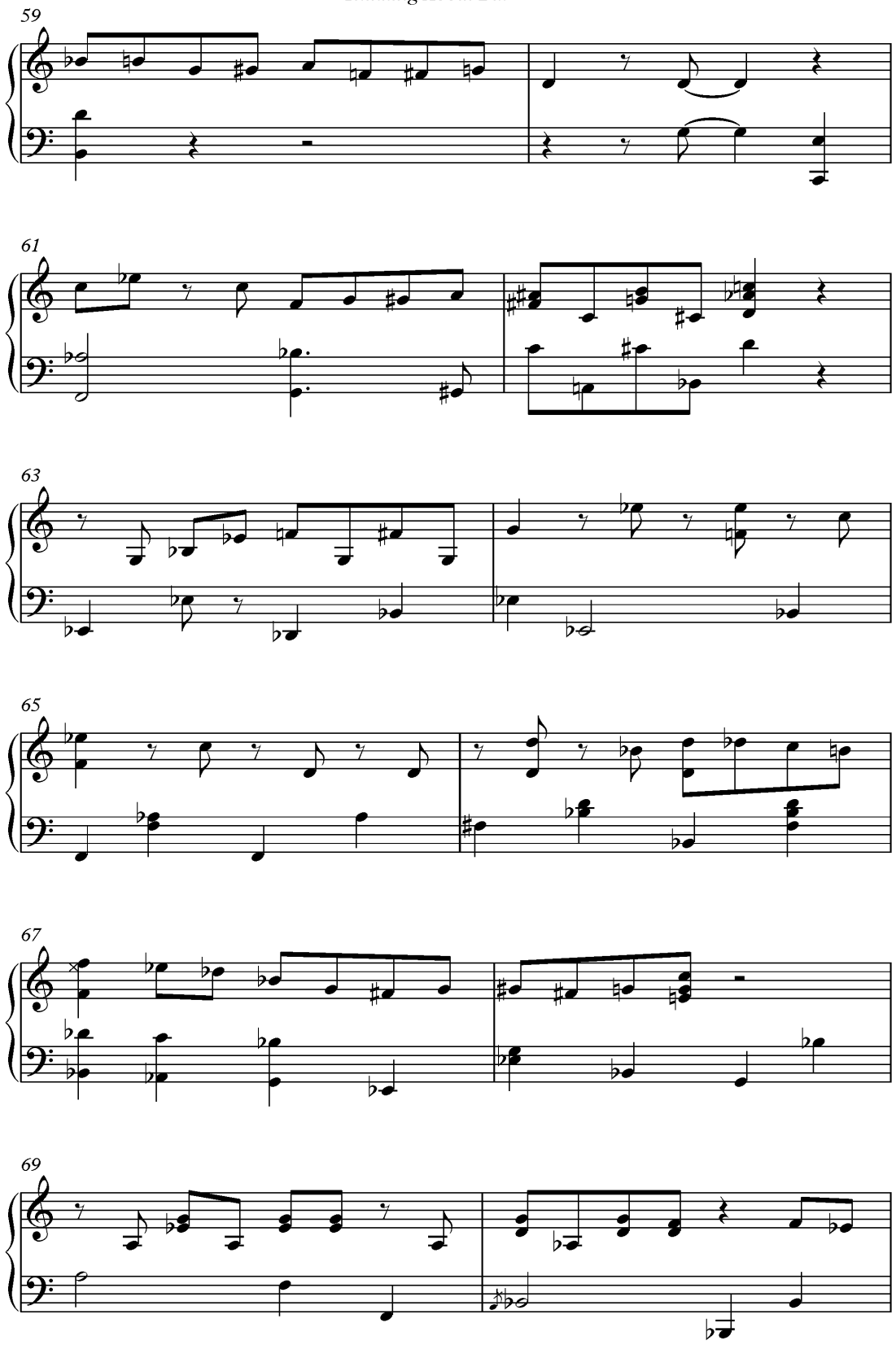
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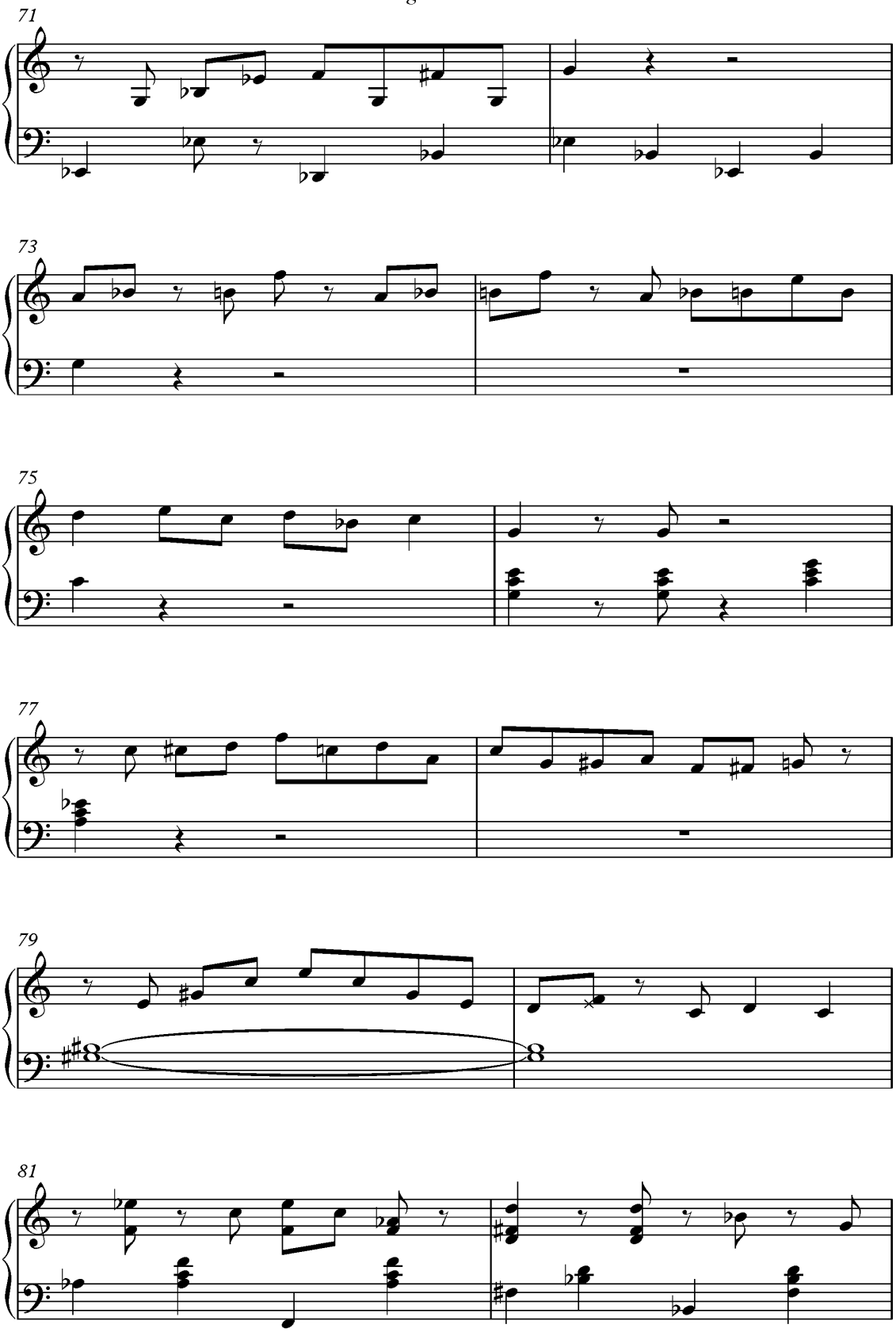
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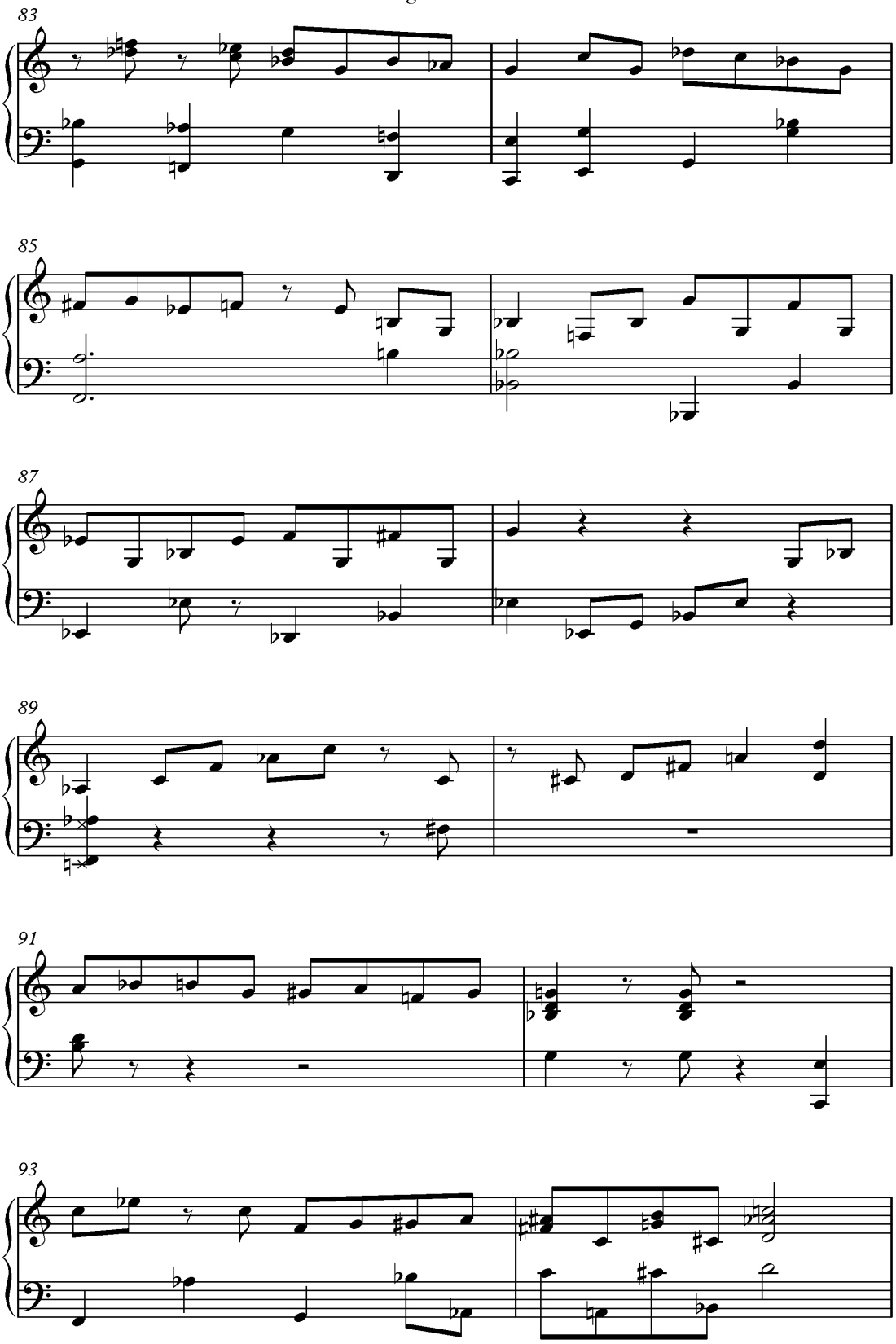
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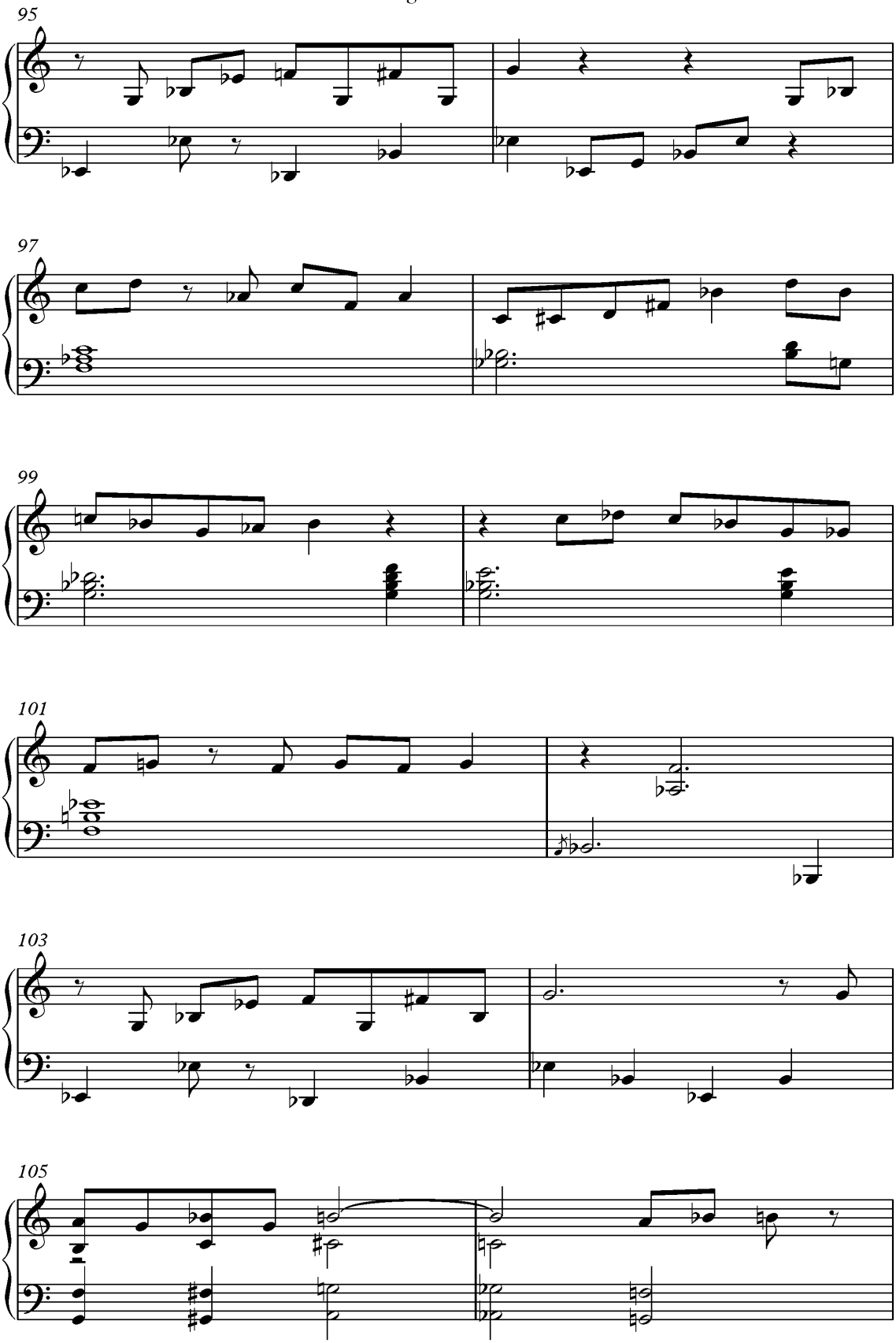
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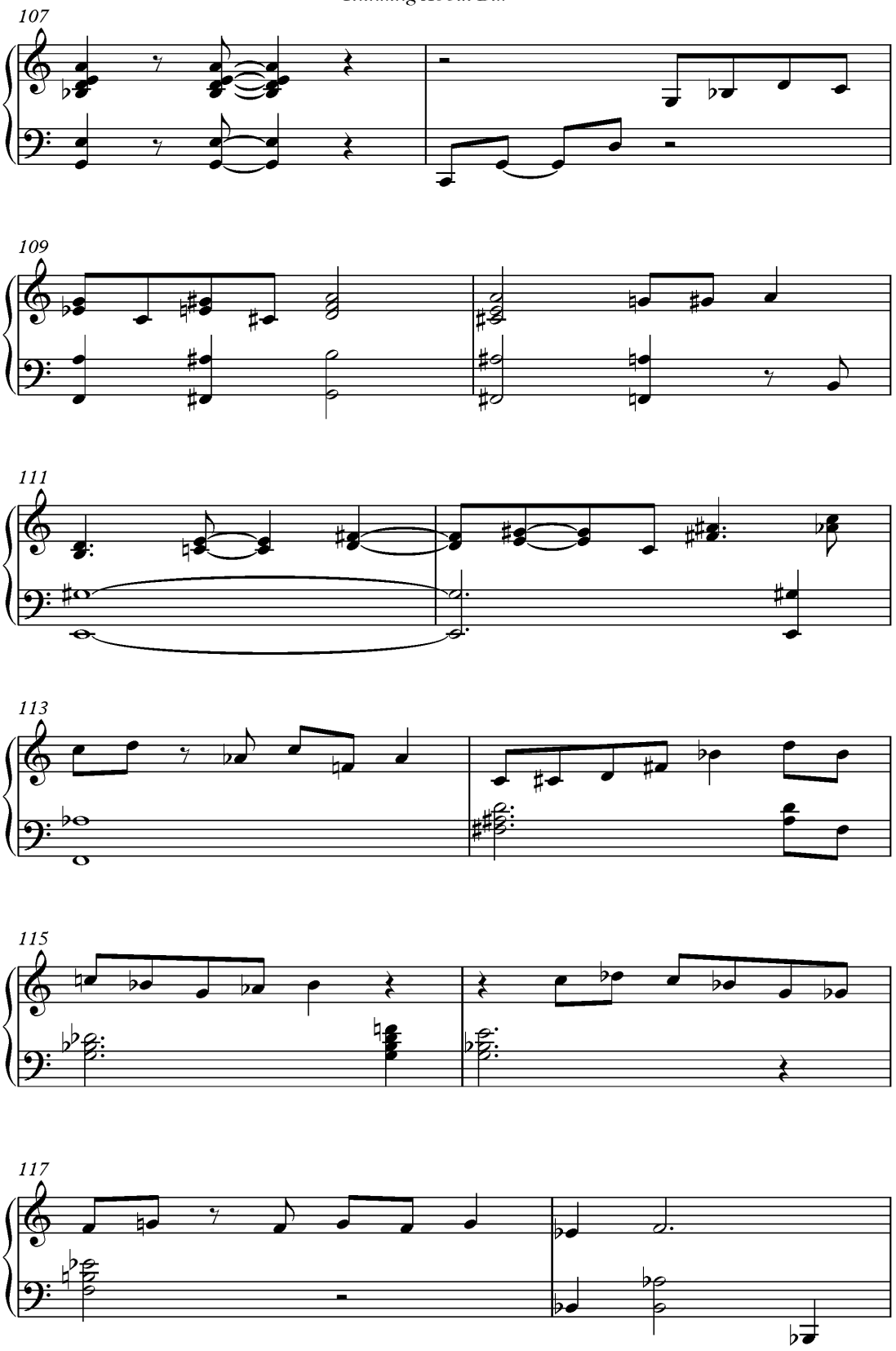
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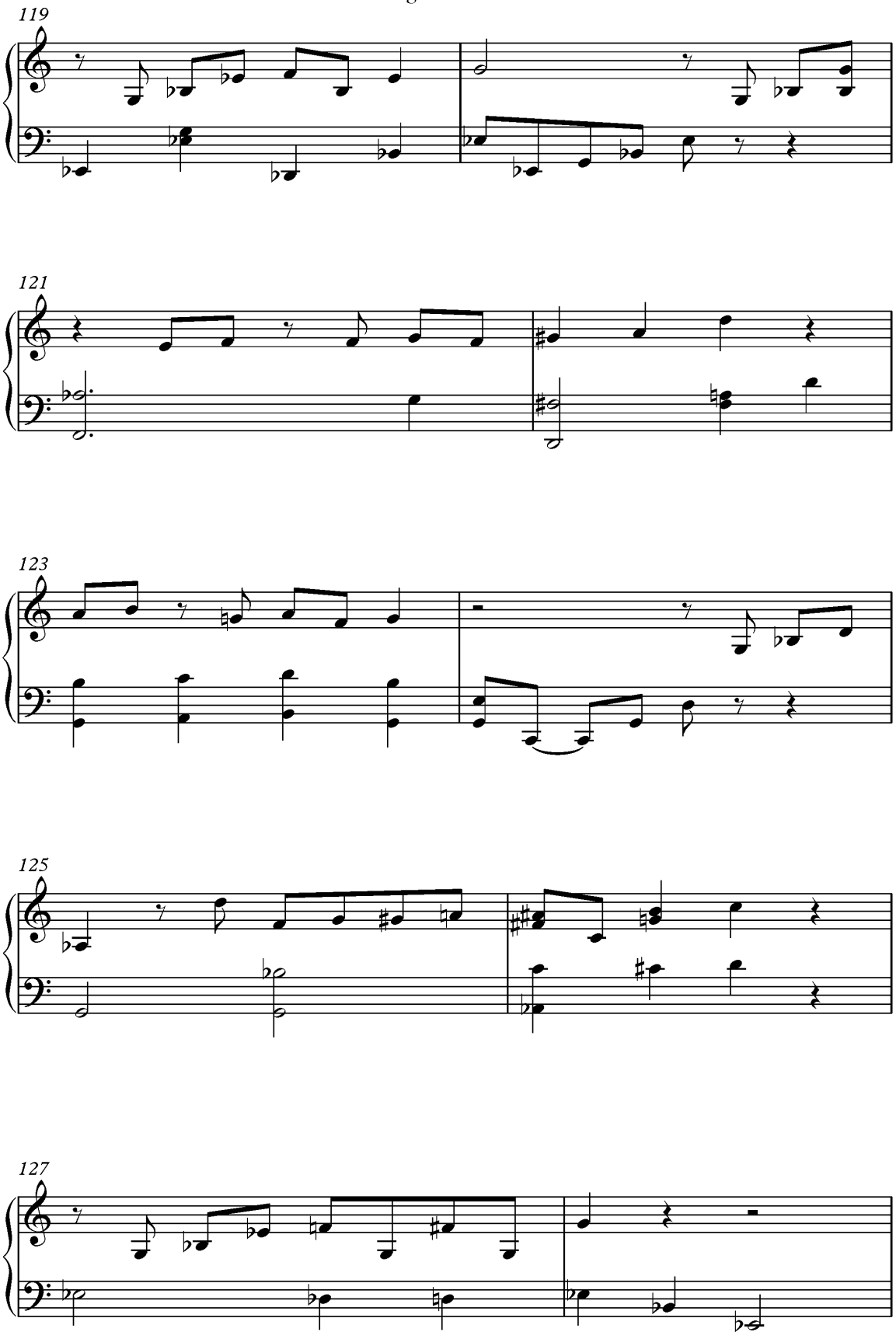
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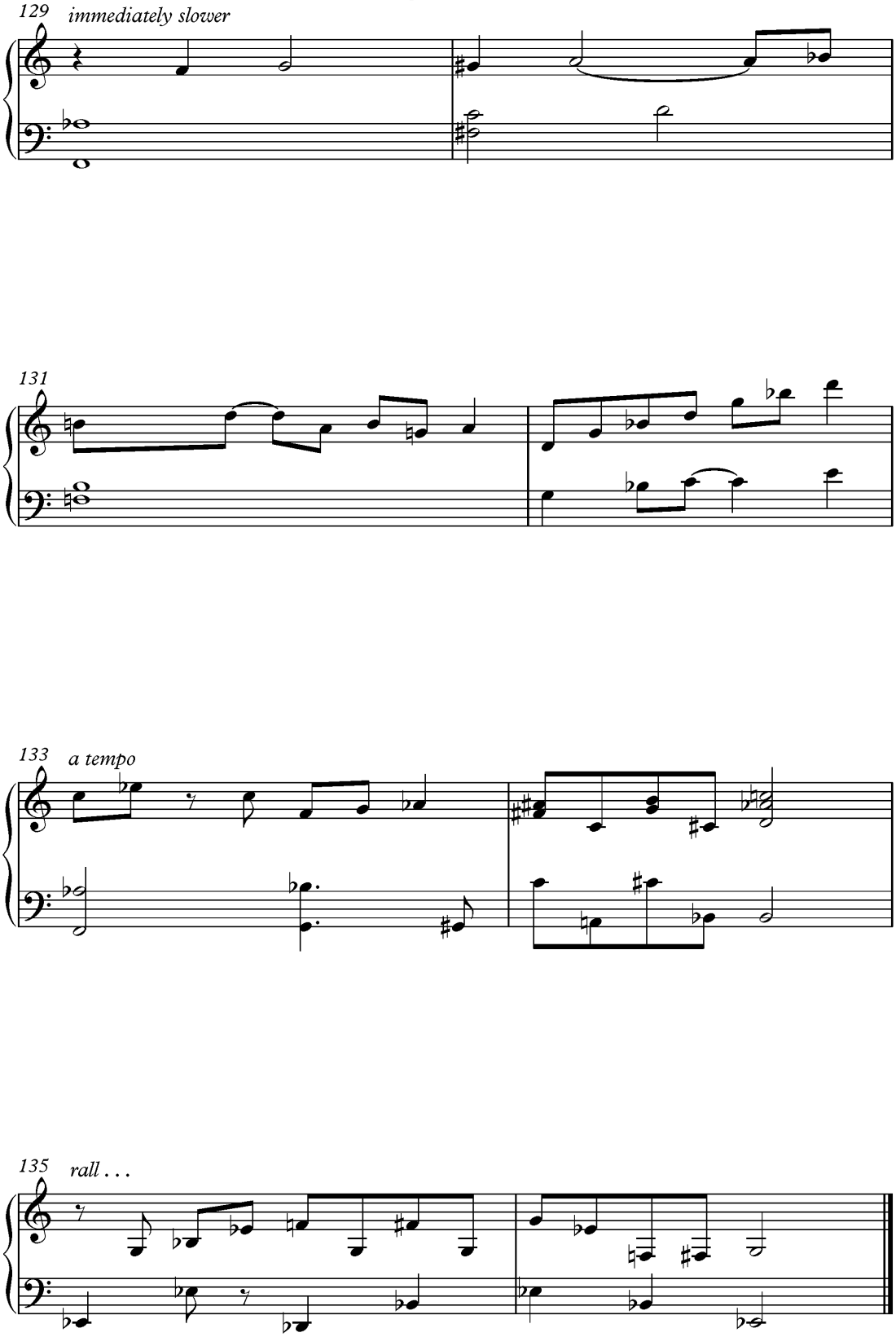
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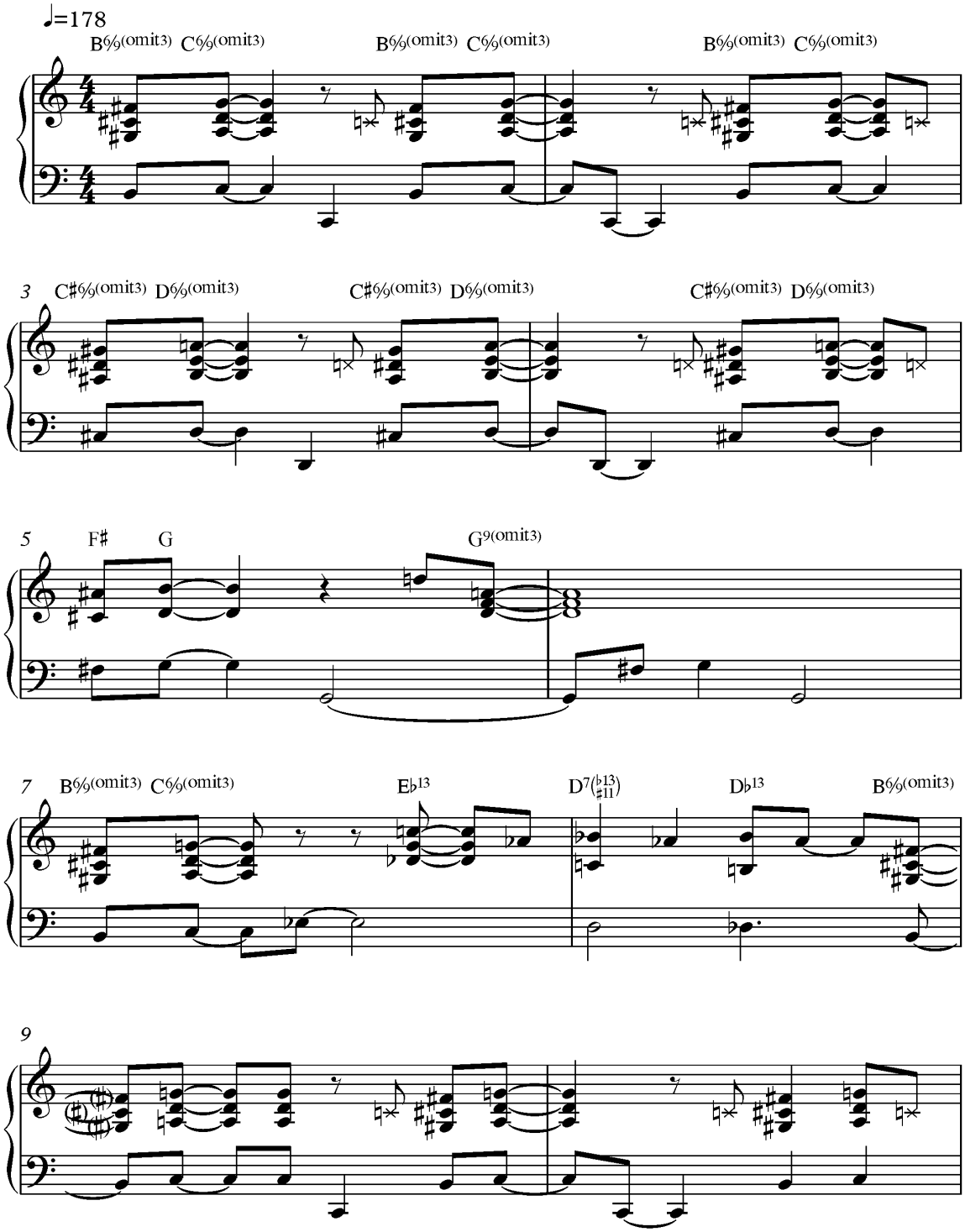
# That's About It

(Ian Pearce on *Tasmanian Jazz Composers Volume III - Ian Pearce*, Track 17)

Composed by Ian Pearce
Transcribed byMatthew Boden



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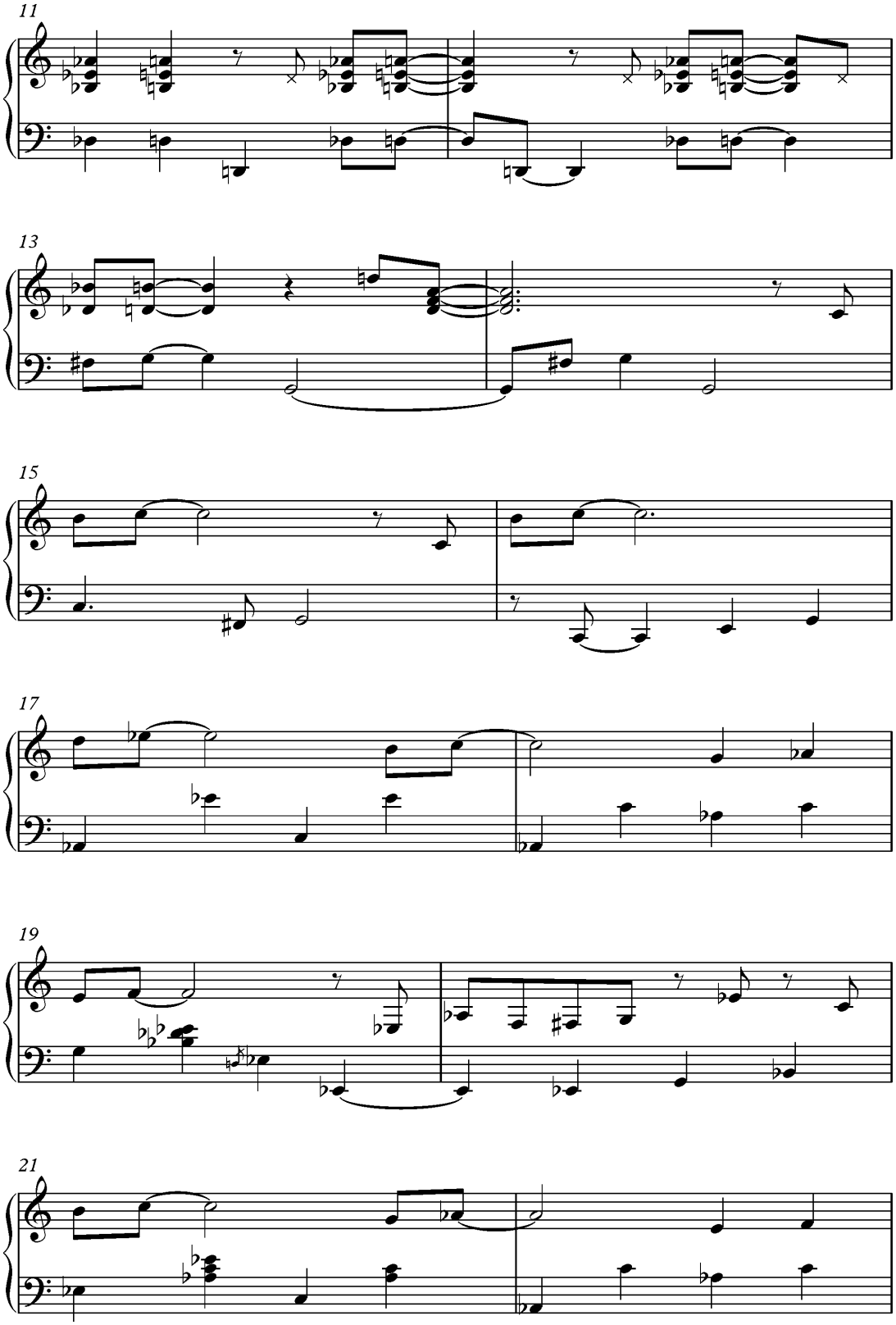

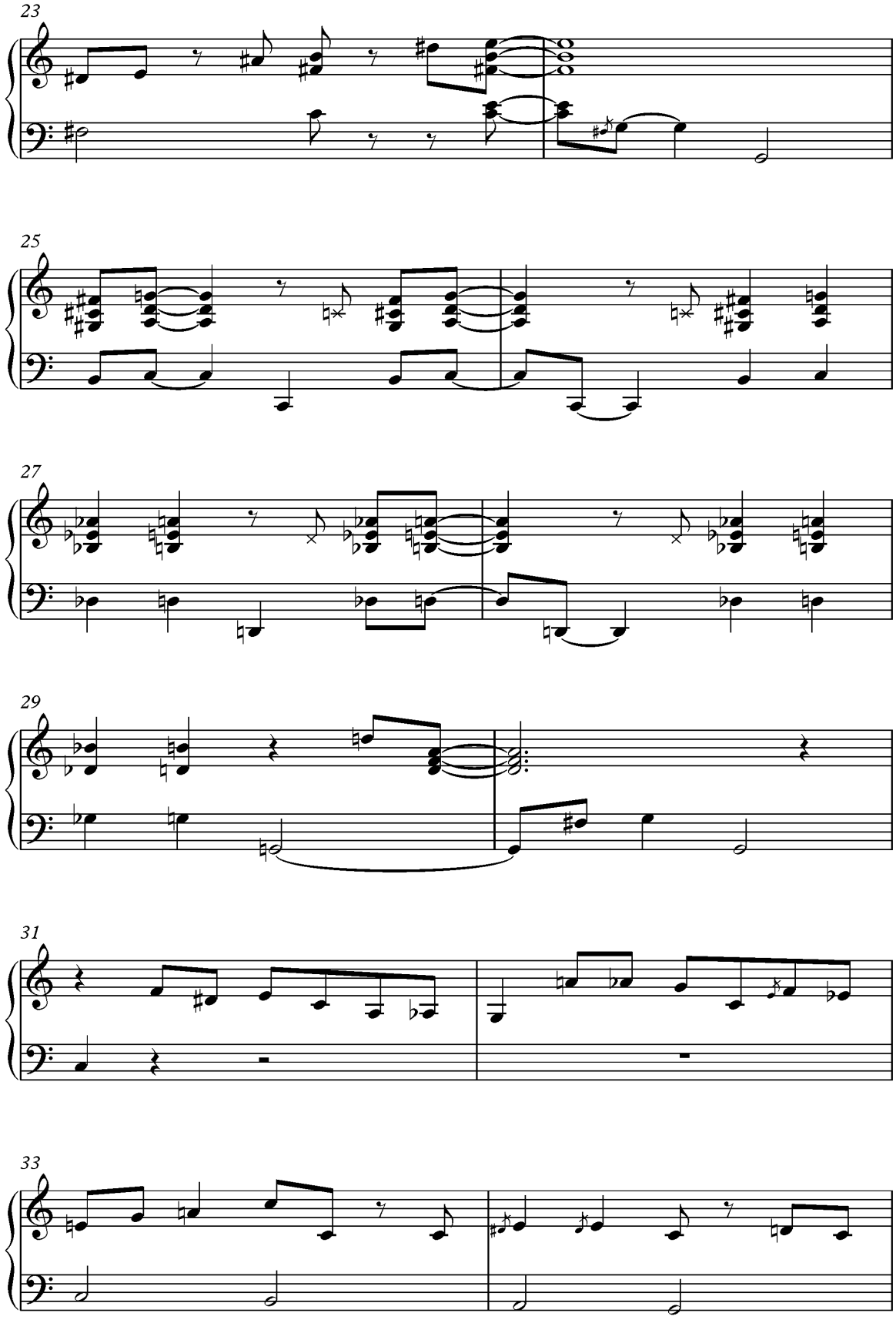
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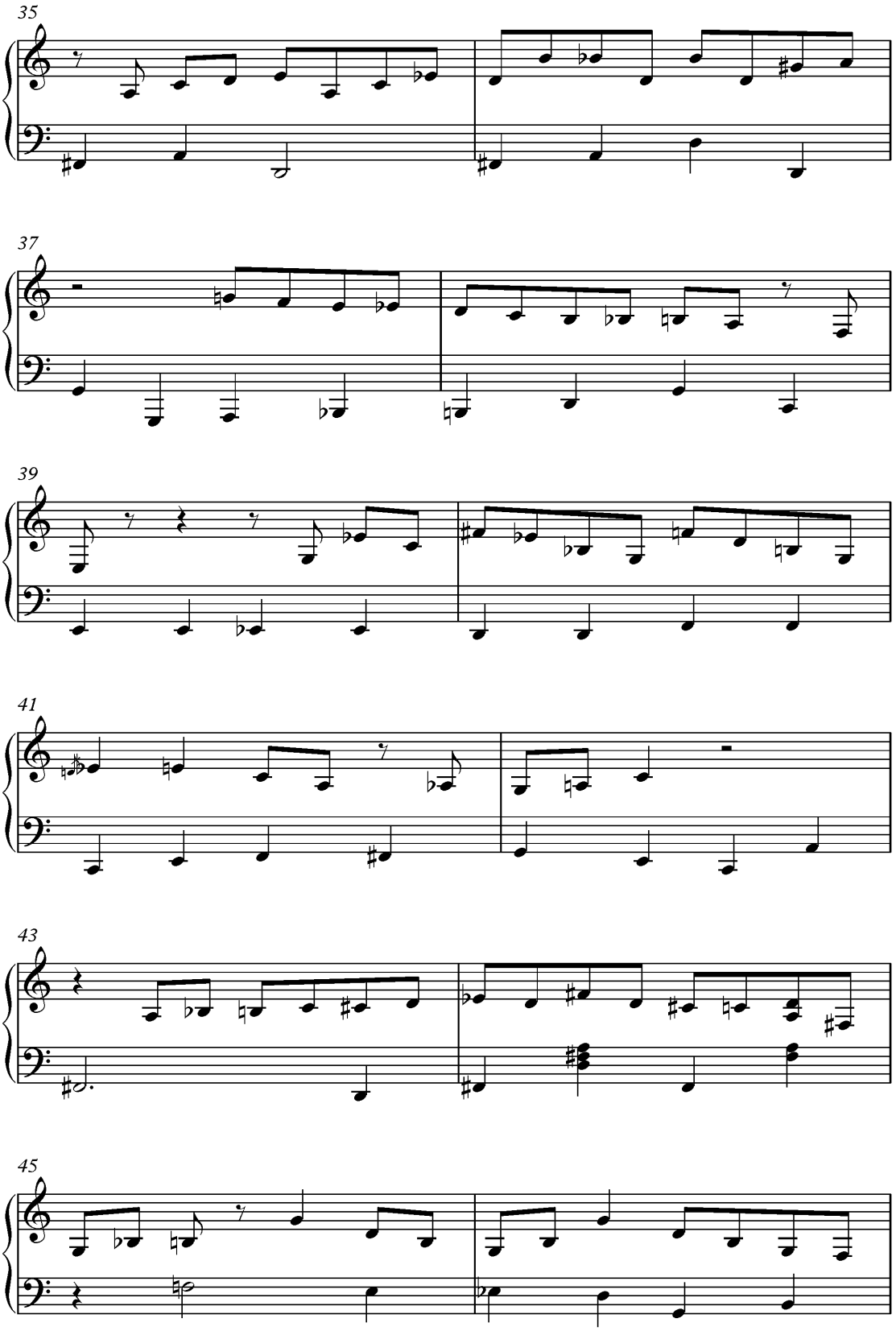
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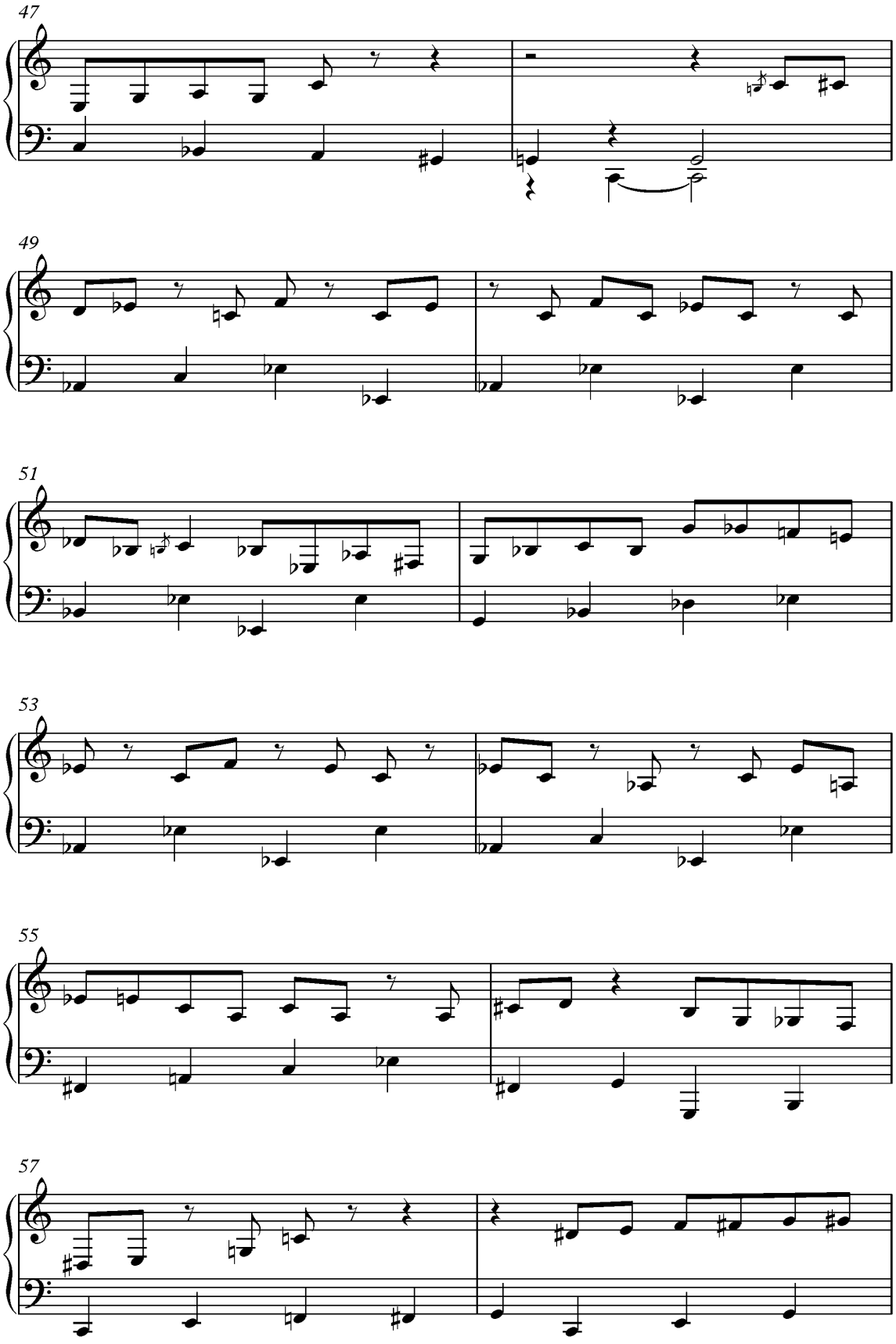
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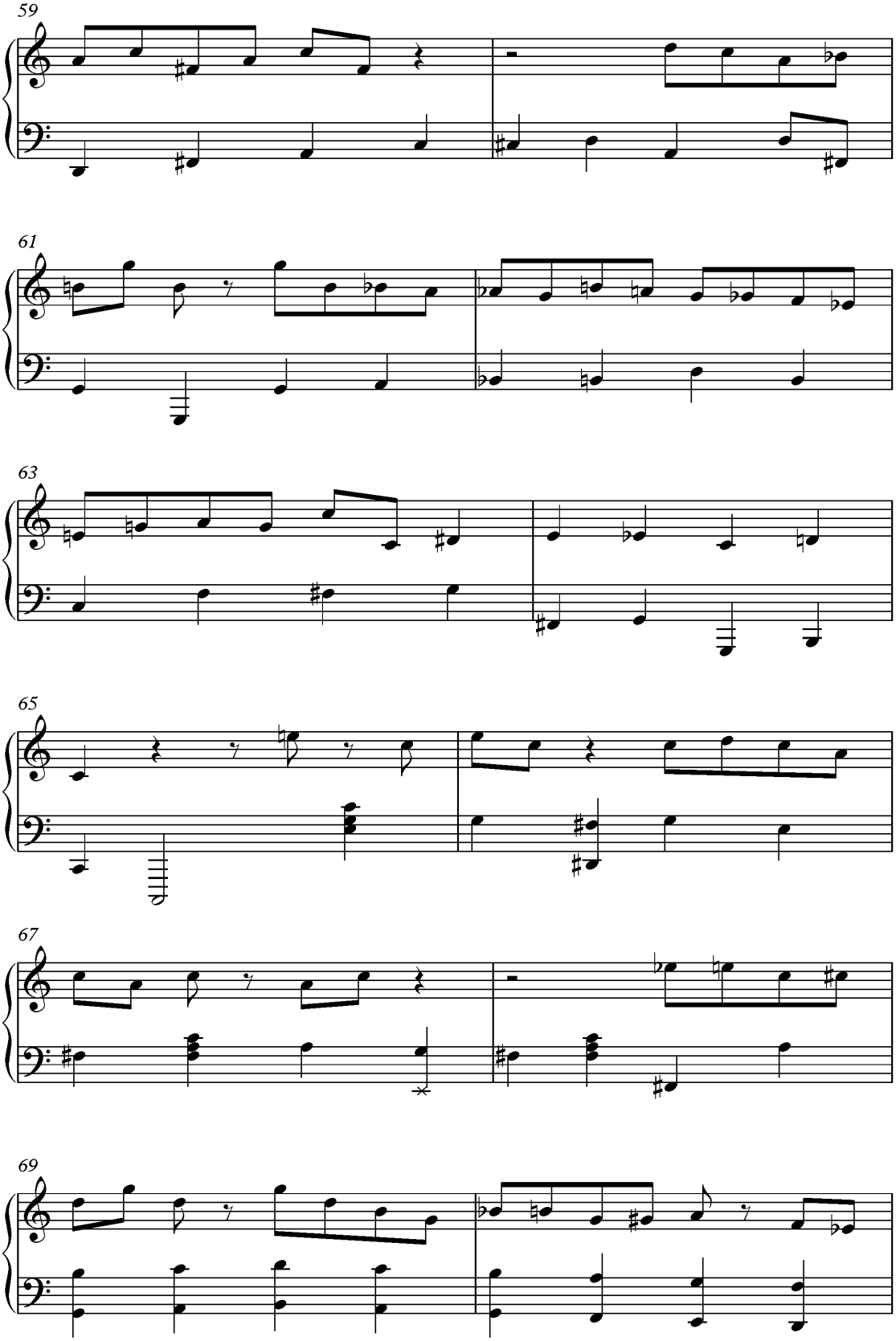
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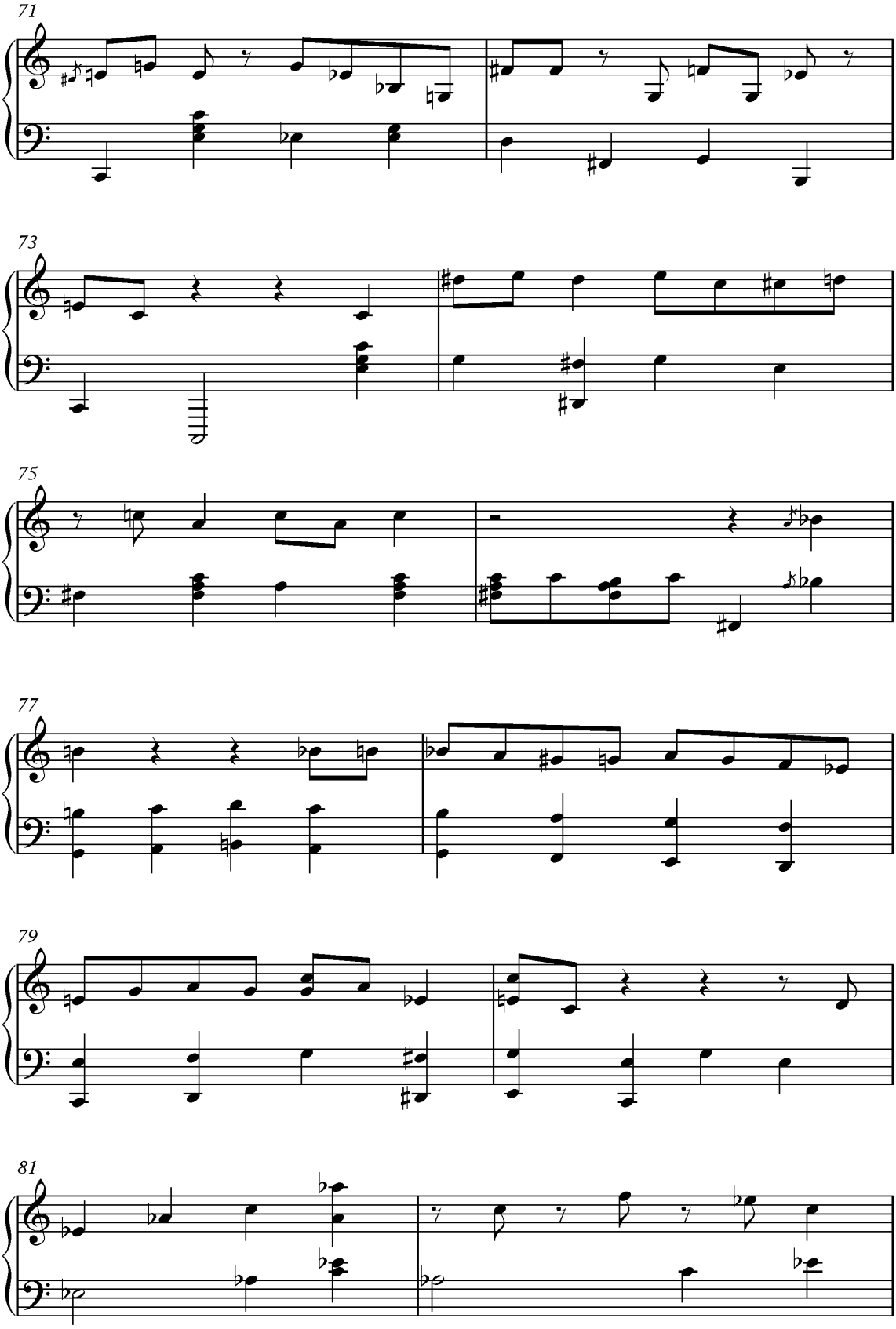
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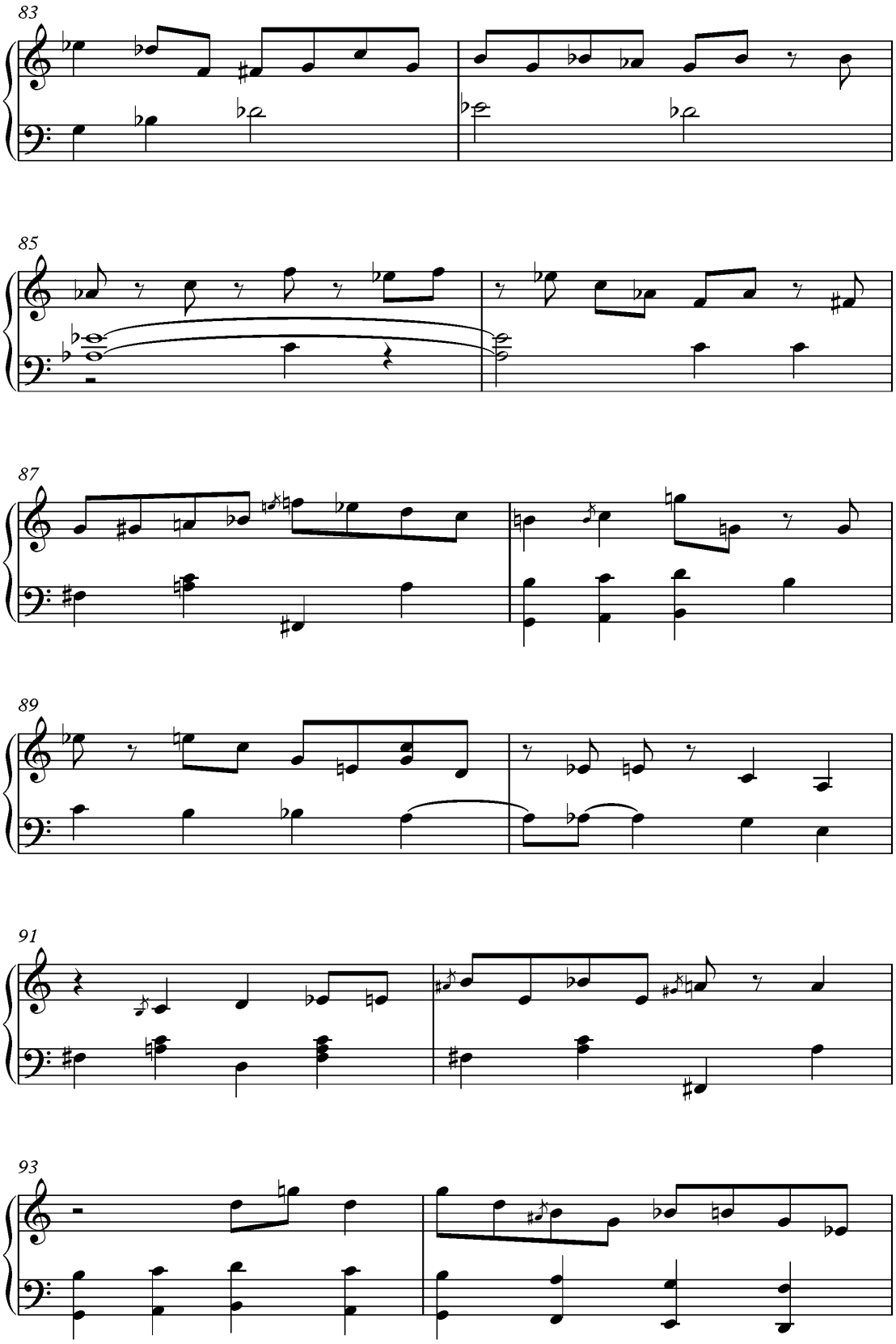
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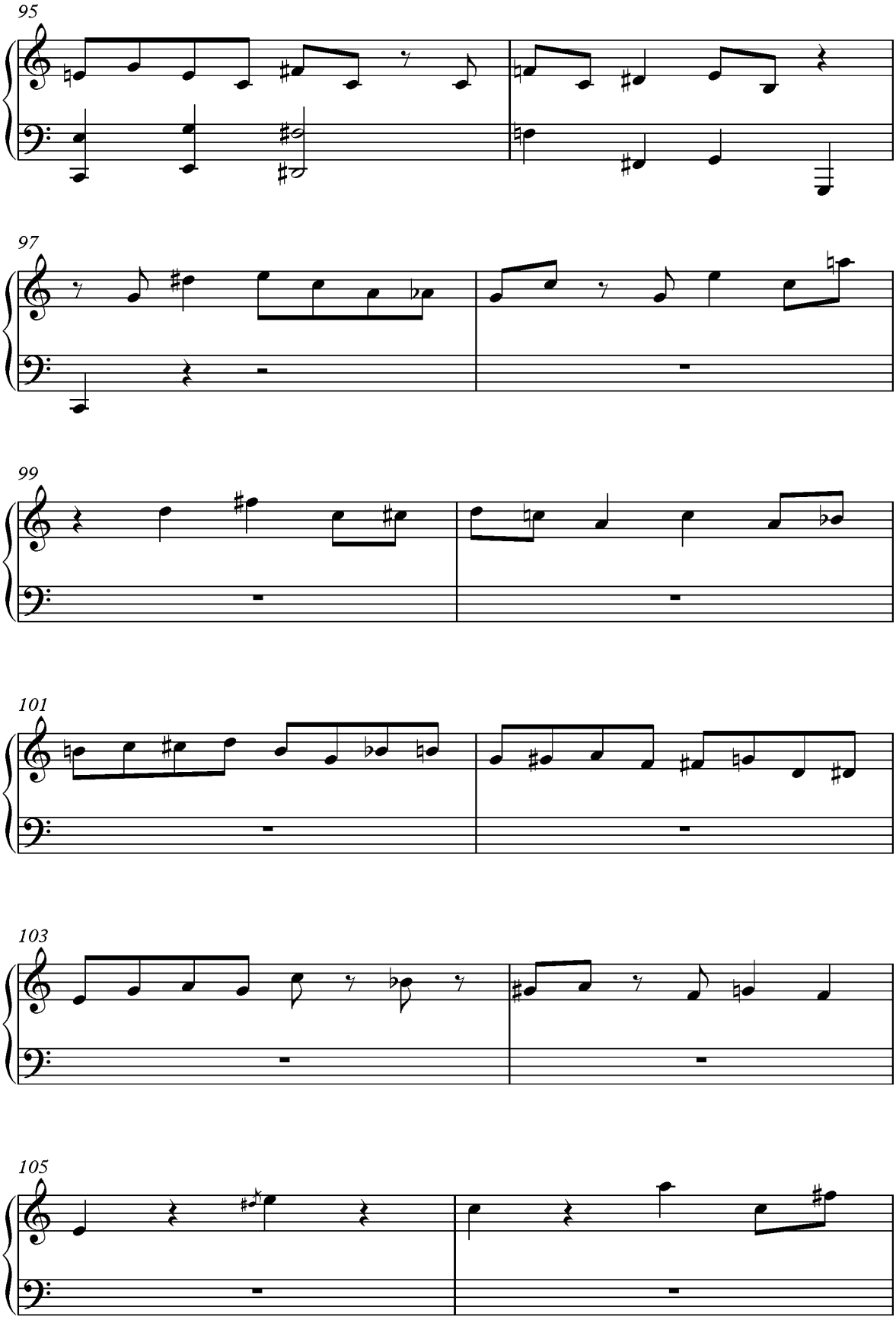
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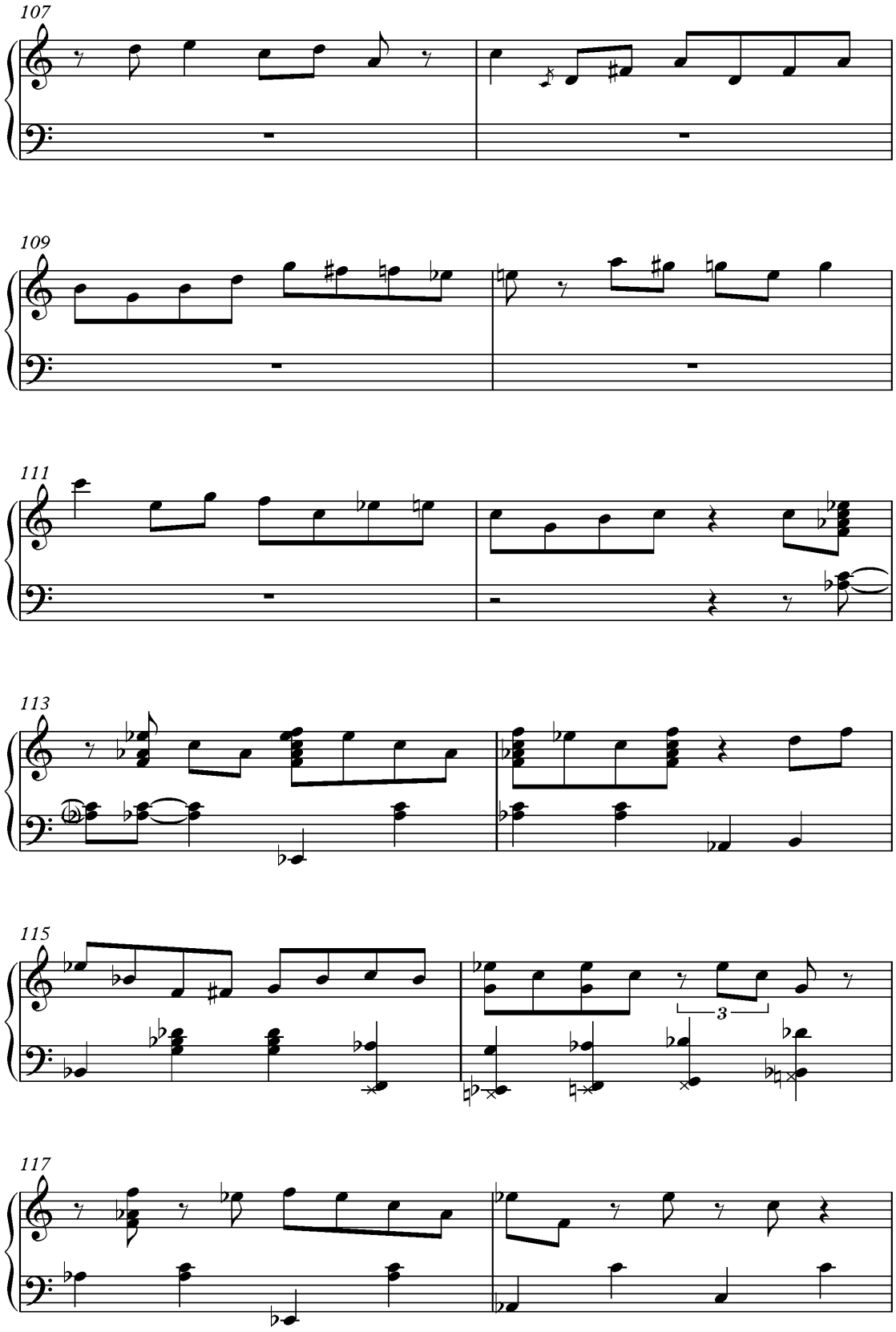
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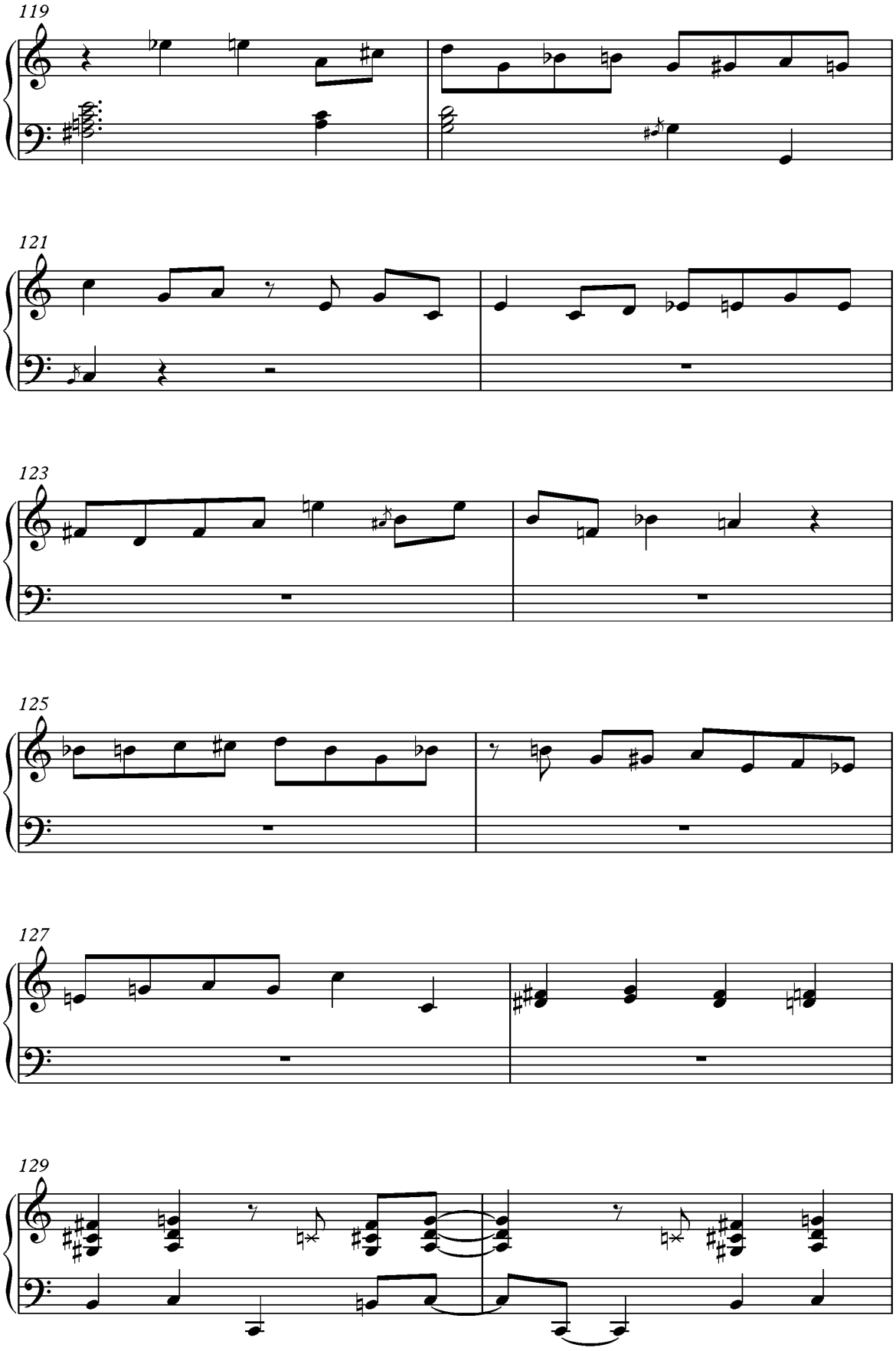
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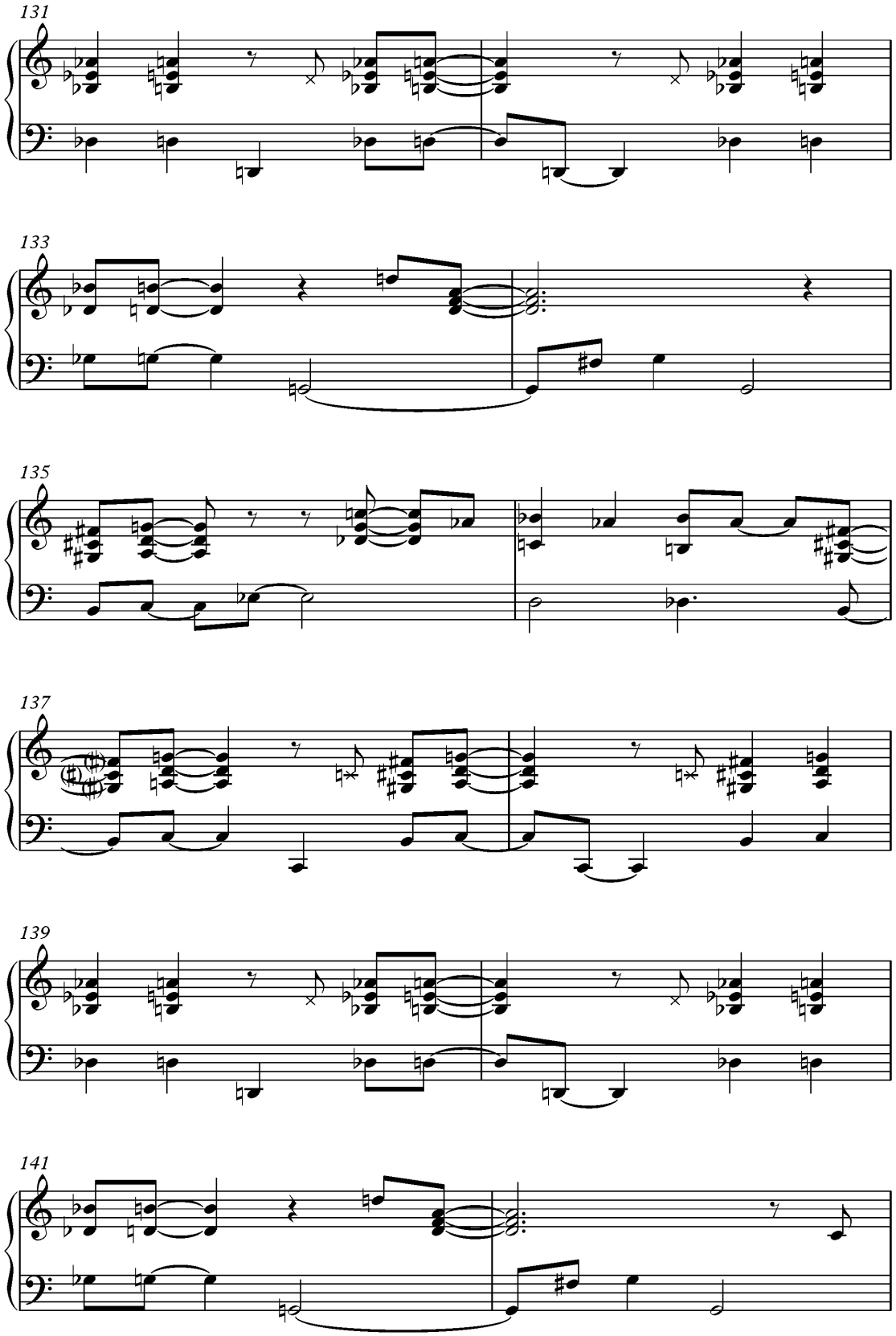
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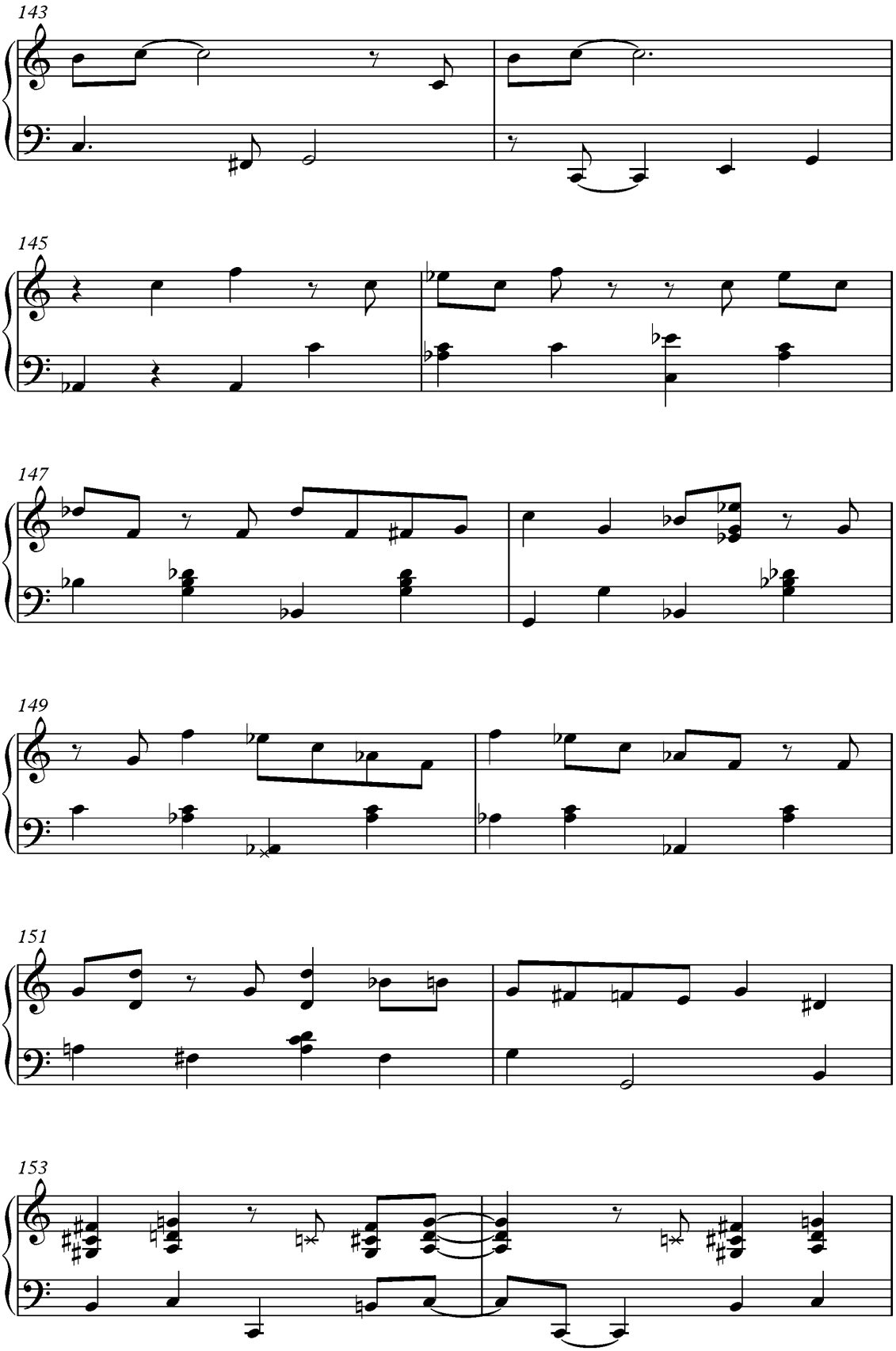
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14 *That's About It*

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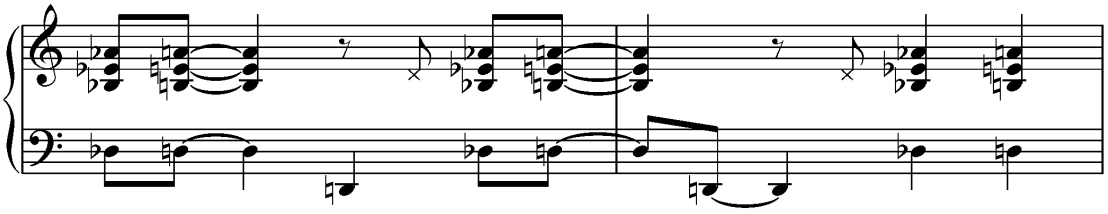

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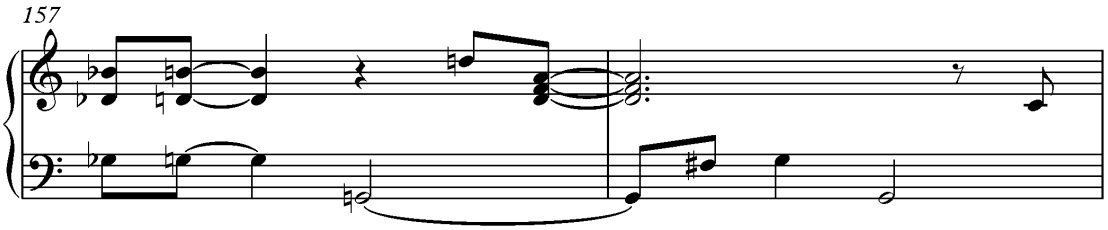

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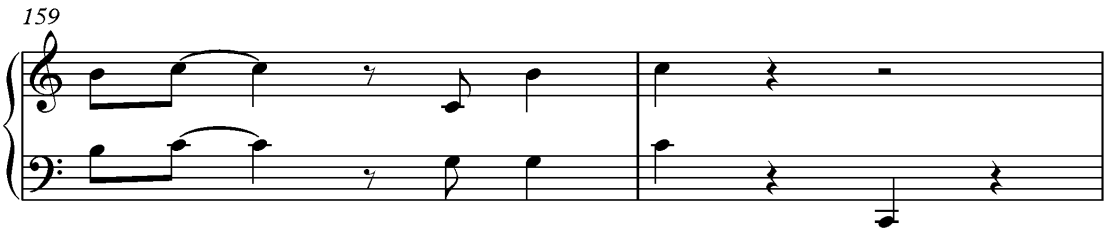
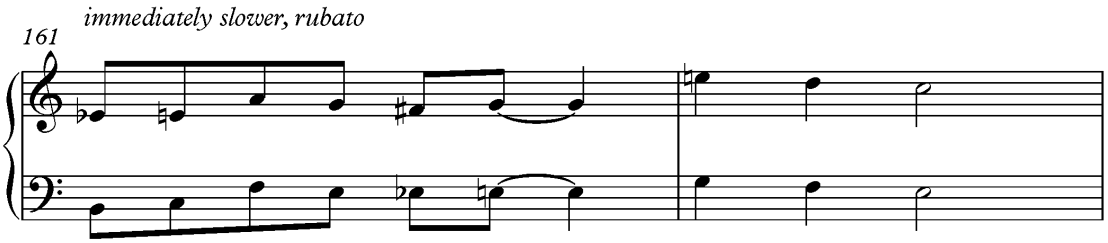


*immediately slower, rubato*

161



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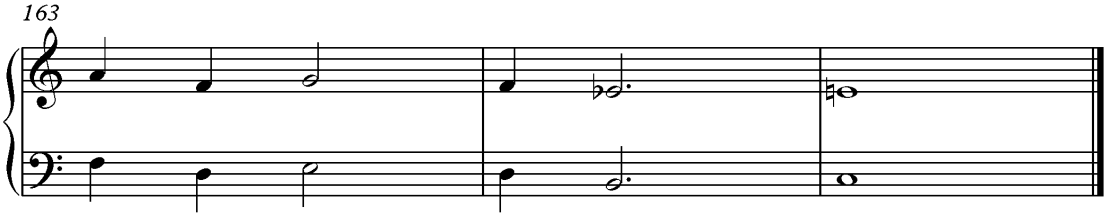

**Appendix 2**

**List of Recordings and Ensemble Personnel**

**CD 1 – Leigh Barker and The New Sheiks *The Last Sheiks***

Barking Mad Music, Recorded 2013.

1. Poor Little Me 5:05
2. Lonesome Train 3:52
3. Do I Love You 4:33
4. Santa Claus Bring My Man Back 2:29
5. Tom Cat Blues 4:29
6. Sex with My Ex 3:44
7. La Louisiana 3:56

Personnel:

Heather Stewart – Vocals and Violin
Eamon McNelis – Trumpet
Don Stewart – Trombone
Matt Boden – Piano
Leigh Barker – Bass
Sam Young – Drums

**CD 2 – John Scurry's Reverse Swing *Post Matinee***

Lionsharecords, Recorded 2016

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Virology | 4:45 |
| 2. | Smoked Trout | 3:08 |
| 3. | By Practised Skill | 3:22 |
| 4. | Tonight I Can Write the Saddest Lines | 4:52 |
| 5. | Your Face | 4:08 |
| 6. | Post Matinee | 4:50 |
| 7. | Funicular | 3:48 |
| 8. | Last Trams | 5:52 |
| 9. | A Blackbird Skipped Quivering Between Things | 4:08 |
| 10. | I'm Still Arranging My Life Around You | 2:59 |
| 11. | Yes | 2:48 |
| 12. | Press On | 4:01 |
| 13. | A Walk Around Tom | 3:41 |
| 14. | Otis The Cat | 4:09 |
| 15. | How Calm the Sea is Tonight | 3:59 |
| 16. | Sad Songs | 4:45 |
| 17. | Thomas and Green | 2:20 |

Personnel:

Eugene Ball – Trumpet

Michael McQuaid – Clarinet, Tenor Saxophone
Matt Boden – Piano
Howard Cairns – Double Bass, English Concertina
John Scurry – Guitar

Augmented by Guests:

Shelley Scown – Vocals (tracks 3, 5, 11, 15)
Danny Fischer – Drums (tracks 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17)
Jame Macaulay – Trombone (tracks 2, 7, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17)
Phil Noy – Alto Saxophone (tracks 10, 15, 17)

**CD 3 – Live Concert Recording: The Leigh Barker Band at The Jazz Lab (Melbourne)**

Unreleased – forthcoming release in 2019 on Barking Mad Music.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Exactly Like You | 6:36 |
| 2. | Wolverine Blues | 3:14 |
| 3. | She's Cryin' For Me | 3:02 |
| 4. | Poor L'il Me | 5:22 |
| 5. | You Are My Lucky Star | 3:52 |
| 6. | Get Out and Get Under the Moon | 5:22 |
| 7. | Play The Blues and Go | 5:00 |
| 8. | Stevedore Stomp | 3:14 |
| 9. | Jason's Swanage Siesta | 4:50 |
| 10. | I'm the Only One in this Town | 6:04 |
| 11. | Pussy Cat Rag | 3:20 |
| 12. | The Pearls | 3:56 |
| 13. | What's the Use of Living Without Love | 4:00 |
| 14. | I Want Somebody to Love | 4:44 |
| 15. | Chinatown | 6:04 |
| 16. | Say it isn't So | 5:26 |
| 17. | Them There Eyes | 8:54 |
| 18. | Tom Cat Blues | 5:15 |

Personnel:

Heather Stewart – Vocals, violin
Jason Downs – Clarinet, alto saxophone
Ben Harrison – Trumpet
Don Stewart – Trombone, vocals (track 14)
John Scurry – Guitar, banjo
Matt Boden - Piano
Leigh Barker – Bass
Sam Young – Drums

**CD 4 – Chapter 4 Examples**

1. Tom Cat Blues (The Last Sheiks) 4:29
2. Poor Li'l Me (The Last Sheiks) 5:05
3. Black Bottom Stomp (Conservatorium Recital) 2:36
4. Whatnot (Conservatorium Recital) 2:04
5. A Little Something (Conservatorium Recital) 3:36
6. Marionette (Conservatorium Recital) 4:20
7. Virology (Post Matinee) 4:45
8. By Practised Skill (Post Matinee) 3:32
9. Post Matinee (Post Matinee) 4:49
10. A Walk Around Tom (Post Matinee) 3:41
11. Sad Songs (Post Matinee) 4:45
12. Jason's Swanage Siesta (Jazz Lab Concert) 4:50
13. Chinatown (Jazz Lab Concert) 6:04
14. Stevedore Stomp (Jazz Lab Concert) 3:14

All personnel for these tracks are listed above.

**DVD 1**

Recital performance at the Conservatorium of Music, University of Tasmania. Recorded May 2015.

Personnel:

Matt Boden – Piano

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